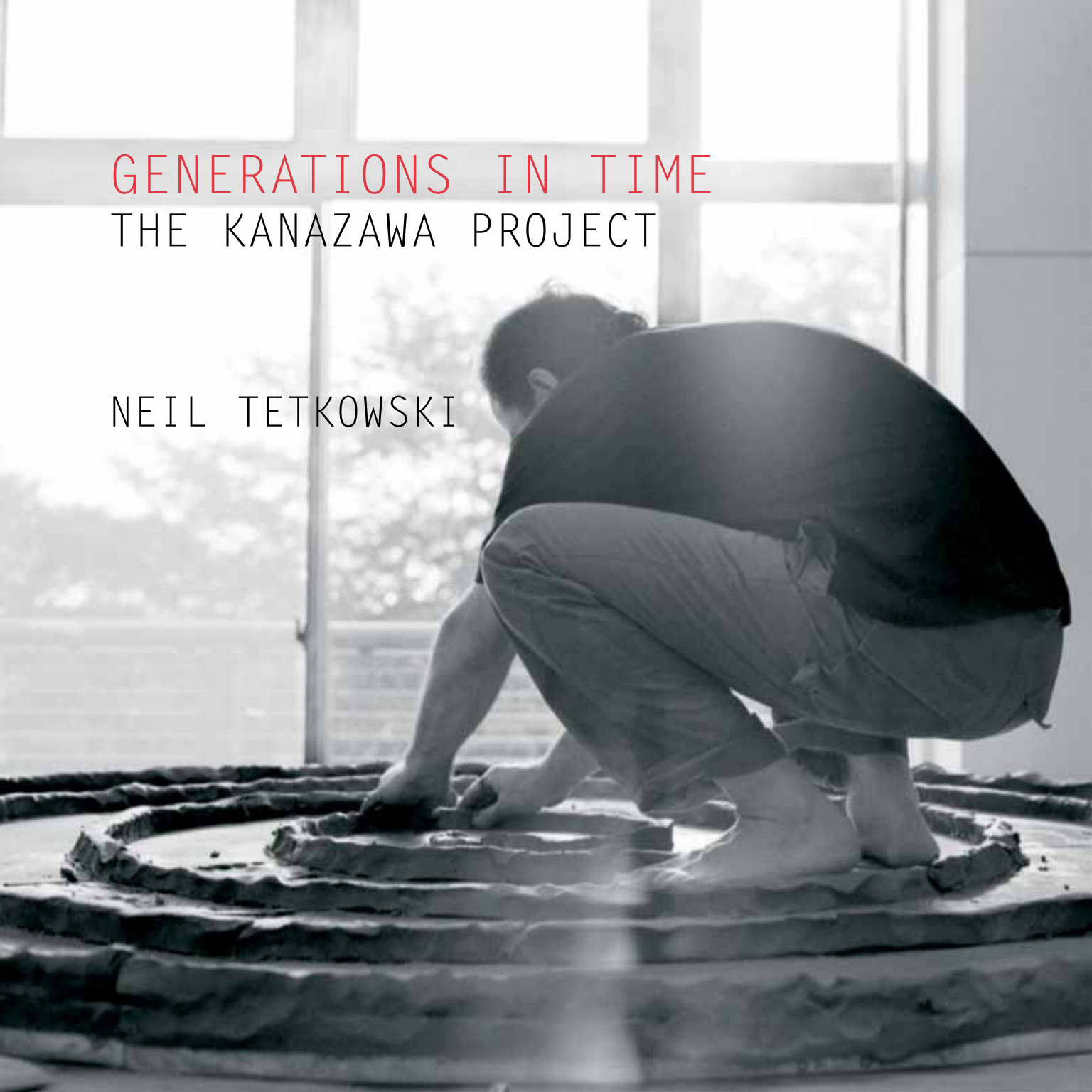


GENERATIONS IN TIME
THE KANAZAWA PROJECT

NEIL TETKOWSKI





**"I ENVISION A CLOCK THAT HAS STOPPED.
ONE HUNDRED HAND PRINTS CAPTURED LIKE A SNAPSHOT OR A FAMILY PORTRAIT
BRINGING THESE PEOPLE TOGETHER."**

GENERATIONS IN TIME
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NEIL TETKOWSKI

100 People

Kanazawa, Japan

Consecutive Ages 1-100

Together Create a Public Work

OPPOSITE: SKETCHBOOK 8X10" (26X21CM),
GRAPHITE AND SOY SAUCE.





DIVERSITY AND UNITY



OPPOSITE: HAJIME TAKEDA, 18 (LEFT) AND YUSUKE NOMURA, 19.
ABOVE (CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT): MAYOR YAMADE AND DEPUTY MAYOR THOMAS GLEED;
JUDITH VAN NOSTRAND AND NEIL TETKOWSKI; HAND PRINTING; VALERIE ZIMANY AND NEIL TETKOWSKI WITH UTATSUYAMA
RESIDENTS; UTATSUYAMA RESIDENT; NEIL TETKOWSKI AND WESLEY BURKMAN.





SURROUNDED BY TIME



OPPOSITE: HISAKO KOSAKA, 95.

ABOVE (CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT): NEIL TETKOWSKI AND TOSHIO OHI; NEIL TETKOWSKI COMPLETING THE RIM; SECTIONS WHEN ATTACHED BECOME THE RIM; THE ARTIST COMPLETING THE FORM WITH UTATSUYAMA RESIDENTS; ASSEMBLING 25 SECTIONS; PREPARING YOUNG PARTICIPANT.





REGENERATION AND GROWTH



OPPOSITE (FROM LEFT): TAMAKI IMAMURA, 76; SHIHO SAKAI, 74; MIYUKI FUKUDA, 73; TOSHIKO TERAMOTO, 71;
HIROKO TAKASHITA, 70; FUJIKO SAWADA, 72.

ABOVE (CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT): MIYUKI FUKUDA, TOSHIKO TERAMOTO, SHIHO SAKAI;
WAITING IN LINE; MIYUKI FUKUDA AND TOSHIKO TERAMOTO; GROUP PHOTO; HAND PRINTING; WASHING HANDS.





BUILDING COMMUNITY



OPPOSITE: 100-YEAR-OLD TETSUNOSUKE SAWADA AND NEIL TETKOWSKI.
ABOVE (CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT): MAYOR YAMADE AND DEPUTY MAYOR THOMAS GLEED;
MAYOR YAMADE AND DEPUTY MAYOR THOMAS GLEED; HAND PRINTING; MAYOR YAMADE,
NEIL TETKOWSKI AND TOSHIO OHI; TETSUNOSUKE SAWADA; TETSUNOSUKE SAWADA AND NEIL TETKOWSKI.





SHARED EXPERIENCE



OPPOSITE: THE ISHIGAKI FAMILY (MIKI, 34; AI, 2; YUI, 1; YASUHIITO, 36; KANAME, 6).
ABOVE (CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT): NEIL TETKOWSKI WITH UTATSUYAMA RESIDENTS; YOUNG PARTICIPANT
HAND PRINTING; UTATSUYAMA RESIDENTS; GROUP OF UTATSUYAMA RESIDENTS WHO ASSISTED IN THE PROJECT;
YOUNG PARTICIPANT COMPLETES THE HAND PRINT; NEIL TETKOWSKI AND FRIENDS.



NEIL TETKOWSKI GENERATIONS IN TIME

Throughout his career, artist Neil Tetkowski has been raising the bar. He has created larger and larger scale projects that span the globe and move us all, regardless of age and ethnicity. He has long recognized that our ability to create and to feel emotion through art is something that transforms us; it is an innately human characteristic that can cut through any of our self-imposed barriers. It is this power that Tetkowski has been using as a medium, as much as the materials he uses to make his art.

Neil Tetkowski's latest public work is titled *Generations In Time*. For this project he traveled to Japan where he gathered one hundred people consecutively aged from one to one hundred at the Kanazawa City Hall to have them place their handprints in clay. The result is a portrait of a generation and a celebration of not what makes us American or Japanese but what makes us human. "With the *Kanazawa Project*, I have envisioned a clock that has stopped. One hundred handprints captured like a snapshot or a family portrait bringing these people together. Even though the portrait is static, the people keep moving and changing. It is a metaphor for our experience in time," he says.

The creation of *Generations In Time* was sponsored by the city government of Kanazawa, with help from others, to mark the 40th anniversary of its sister-city program with Buffalo, New York. The city of Kanazawa actively works to promote both traditional Japanese disciplines and modern culture. For *Generations In Time* they gave the assurance of all the city has to offer including the support and use of the Utatsuyama School. This new studio facility, serenely nestled in the mountains surrounded by lush gardens, focuses on ceramics, metal, glass, lacquer and dyeing.

Its student residents, mostly in their twenties, take on intense two- and three-year fellowships in which they are given studios and stipends from the city. The workshop provides state-of-the-art technology while still deeply entrenching students in traditional arts and practices. For example, ceramics students have built a wood-fired anagama kiln. With the help of American resident artist Valerie Zimany, Tetkowski was able to work closely with the students of the ceramics department who gave their unwavering support in the complete process of making the piece.

For *Generations In Time*, Tetkowski knew he wanted to incorporate 100 handprints to show the passage of time—a concept he has utilized in other sculptures. The challenge he faced was how to fit all of the handprints into an eight-foot (2.44 m.) disk and furthermore how to make it possible for the 100 participants to reach their designated position in the large disk. In his Manhattan studio, he created a full-sized drawing of the disk, which is conceived as an open spiral. With the drawing, he was able to calculate the placement of each hand. He then cut the drawing into 25 segments without disturbing the flow of the sculpture. Each segment fit anywhere from three to six handprints and could sit separately from the rest so that when the handprinting was carried out no one would be crowded or strained and the clay would not be overly disturbed. He then sent this stencil to Kanazawa in advance of his trip and the city manufactured 25 plywood boards in accordance with the paper reproduction. Like a huge jigsaw puzzle, all of the sections fit together neatly. With the help of the Utatsuyama students, Tetkowski rolled 1 inch (2.5 cm.) clay slabs onto the wooden boards. The strenuous work



meant that everyone involved in the project lent a hand from the students to the city officials monitoring the process, who rolled up their shirtsleeves and threw themselves into the work.

Considering the scale of the sculpture and the number of people involved, any point in the process of creating *Generations In Time* could have been an organizational nightmare. There were some tense moments, but on the whole the creation ran incredibly smoothly. After the clay was rolled onto the numbered wooden boards, each section was individually wrapped in plastic and carefully transported to the Kanazawa City Hall. Here the city dedicated the large foyer of the government building to the two days needed to realize one hundred unique handprints. The numbered sections were set up in chronological order on separate tables so that there was little confusion as to where the next volunteer should go. This was extremely important during the busiest intervals as, naturally, the participants did not show up in

public moves from being passive viewers to being an integral part of the creation through something as basic and universal as a handprint. This is a powerful metaphor for our world at large. The artist demonstrates how easy it can be for individuals to make a positive mark on our environment and our collective consciousness.

Mimicking the progression of time, the handprints in *Generations In Time* move outward in a chronological spiral of time from the central point, which is the handprint of the one-year-old girl Yui Ishigaki. Yui's father, Yasuhito Ishigaki, who lived in the United States with his family as part of a work exchange, brought the entire family of five to put their handprints in the clay. He believed it was important to be involved on a personal and an international level. "This monument will be in this city where every time we go there I can contemplate and compare the size of my children's hands," he says. "That's very nice. It also

TETKOWSKI PROVIDED A MEETING PLACE FOR THE CITIZENS OF BUFFALO AND KANAZAWA TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER AND COMMEMORATE THEIR BOND.

chronological order. When the two days were over, the imprinted slabs of clay were then assembled in order on the round aluminum table that had been shipped from Tetkowski's studio especially for the occasion.

Throughout the process of making *Generations In Time*, Tetkowski provided an opportunity for the citizens of Buffalo and Kanazawa to appreciate each other and commemorate their bond for years to come. This dialogue between cultures is essential to what makes the piece so important and relevant. "What I like about the *Kanazawa Project* is that it gave us an opportunity not just to show up and say, this is what I'm doing in America," Tetkowski says. "It was an opportunity to create and build something together." Tetkowski's projects build new spaces that focus on how we as humans are all interconnected. In these works, the

shows communication and interaction between cities, and it is very important that we can show that we have a good friendship with the U.S." This was a sentiment echoed by many of the participants who came from all over the city and far afield during Japan's rainy season to offer their unique prints. The diverse cross section of people who were involved was exhilarating and inspiring. Kanazawa's Mayor Yamade and the visitors who came from Buffalo to celebrate the sister-city anniversary also were volunteers. There was a palpable buzz in the air throughout both days of handprinting as each person involved was given the time to talk with Tetkowski and reflect on the work's deeper meanings.

Generations In Time is the second sculpture in a larger series conceptualized by Tetkowski entitled the *Common Ground World Project*. This project works to transcend our perceived barriers of

age, politics, language and ethnicity to find a truly common ground for all people. The project is the answer to Tetkowski's greater question: "What would happen if you took earth from all countries and blended them together?" Tetkowski's response to his own question was to reach out to all 188 member states of the United Nations and to ask them to send him local clay or sand samples. This ambitious endeavor took a year and a half, but in the end he reached his goal, receiving packages of clay from around the globe, along with photos of the individuals and groups in the act of gathering them. Some towns even made events out of the process and Tetkowski has a collection of clippings from local newspapers around the world that covered their involvement. He catalogued all the samples and combined them to make one "world clay." This special world-clay mixture was used to create the first sculpture in the series, entitled the *World Mandala Monument*, a 10-foot sculpture that was shown at the United Nations visitor's lobby. One hundred pounds

tea-ceremony ceramics, likened the experience to a tea ceremony. "The tea concept is one chance, one meeting. For this event, people are gathering and this time never comes back. If we can all appreciate this idea, we can share the moment together. It is part of the piece," he says. This parallel is clear to Tetkowski who has long found inspiration from the Japanese arts of the tea ceremony and Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arranging. The creation of *Generations In Time* marks another link in a 20-year relationship that the artist has had with Japan from his many travels and studies to a string of successful art exhibitions in Tokyo.

Tetkowski has worked to make these huge projects a reality because of his deep conviction that art is a vital community process. "We need these moments and symbols to remind ourselves of who we are and what we can positively achieve together," he says. Through the project and the trips surrounding it, there were so many individuals who gave their time, money

"WE NEED THESE MOMENTS AND SYMBOLS TO REMIND OURSELVES OF WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE CAN POSITIVELY ACHIEVE TOGETHER"

(45 kilograms) of world clay were mixed in with 1,100 pounds (500 kilograms) of local Japanese clay from the city of Shigaraki to complete the Kanazawa Project.

A mandala, most commonly associated with Hinduism and Buddhism, is a symbol of the universe and totality. It is a circular design that can be seen in various guises throughout time and cultures. For Tetkowski, it is a symbol of "interconnection and regeneration," an emblem that binds the unique countries of our earth. This symbol was not lost on anyone who participated in the *Generations In Time* mandala in Kanazawa. Ninety-one-year-old Tomiko Hikita was struck by the emotion of being one of the 100 people chosen to put her hands in the world clay. "It gave me a rich feeling, a feeling of harmony," she says. She described the unexpected rush she received when she put her hand in the clay. For all, it is the mixing of the world clay with 100 years of the ages of man that creates a powerful experience. Toshio Ohi, 11th-generation artisan from the Ohi family famous for its exquisite

and energy to the project for nothing more than the belief that art projects like this are healing. "What makes the *Kanazawa Project* interesting," says Tetkowski, "is that we were able to realize it beyond the idea. We managed to get 100 people and a city government in a foreign country to sponsor it, not only to spend time but to make a commitment, a public commitment," he says. "They involved their citizens. The symbolism here is pretty strong; it's direct and profound."

It is through projects like the *Common Ground World Project* that the idea of globalization can be more clearly defined. We are expanding beyond mere commercial globalization to something far more spiritual and creative. The narrowing of borders and the opening up of information allows for communication on levels never possible before. *Generations In Time* is globalization on its best behavior—individuals coming forward to work towards a creative goal through elements which we all have access to—ourselves and the earth beneath our feet.

Special thanks to all our friends in Kanazawa
Mayor Tamotsu Yamade
People at City Hall
Toshio Ohi
Minoru Harada
The Kanazawa College of Art
Valerie Zimany
Students of the Utatsuyama School
Wakamatsu Shipping Co. Ltd.
Shibuya Foundation
100 Participants



The Kanazawa Project would not have been possible without the support and dedication of Dr. Takako Michii.

Special thanks to our friends in Buffalo, New York
Buffalo Mayor Anthony M. Masiello
Deputy Mayor Tom Gleed
Buffalo Kanazawa Sister City Organization
Mentholatum Corporation, Fujisawa Healthcare, Zemsky Family
Supporters of the *Common Ground World Project*

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Printed by Petit Printing, Buffalo, NY



This project is made possible by the support of the City of Kanazawa and the sponsorship of the New York Foundation for the Arts

More information at www.tetkowski.com

The *Common Ground World Project* is officially endorsed at the United Nations by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

