

# All the World's a Stage: The Nineteenth Century Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) House as Theater

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*Auf den Brettern, die die Welt bedeuten.*

— Schiller

*The Huxwhukw's voice is heard all over the world. Assemble at your places dancers! at the edge of the world.*

— Kwakwaka'wakw Song

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is a preliminary investigation into the semiotics of space used in the theater formulation of the Kwakwaka-speaking Kwakwaka'wakw of the Pacific Northwest as seen by Franz Boas at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> For these people, the potlatch and its affiliated exhibitions functioned as both theatrical venue and core of artistic expression. It is in the performances that masks and other artistic statements of social prerogative are displayed and validated. Through the struc-

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ture, space, location, and decoration of their theaters, the Kwakwaka'wakw made culturally significant statements concerning individuals, family, and community. By means of the "stage," these people both defined and influenced their social identity and position. Semiotics provides a mechanism by which we can elucidate the formulations utilized in the theatrical communication of these messages.

When semiotics, which has its origins in linguistics, is applied to theater studies, it is primarily involved in the analysis of the written text. This is due in part to the nature of theatrical performance and its simultaneous presentation of diverse sign systems, which vary in form as well as duration. Consequently, the student of semiotics tends towards an evaluation of the unvarying written manuscript.<sup>2</sup> Yet there is another system besides the language text which is usually consistent throughout a given performance and often from presentation to presentation: the actual theater structure and the overall space which it defines. As a corollary to the semiotic sign systems used in architecture, recent studies specifically concerned with theaters have appeared.<sup>3</sup>

Umberto Eco has proposed that any piece of architecture exists as a signifier (the physical structure) and a signified meaning (the function fulfilled by the building).<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, any theater's structure is open to further connotations within the context of the originating culture. Most inquiries into the semiotics of theaters have focused on types developed during periods of European history. However, semiotic analysis can also provide insight into the theater forms of non-Western cultures.

A number of investigators have acknowledged the theatrical aspects of Kwakwaka'wakw ceremony. Philip Drucker talks about the "cycles of dramas" while Joyce Wike describes the presentations as "theatrical vehicles for the display of wealth and hereditary prerogatives."<sup>5</sup> Although the impetus for staging such events was the validation of individual and family rights, "the dramatic and esthetic motivations were very strong as evidenced by the continuing elaboration of masks and ceremonial paraphernalia ..., the strikingly imaginative use of illusions and sleight-of-hand in certain performances, and the theatrical staging of events."<sup>6</sup> However, it is not at all clear whether the actual participants viewed their performances within this construct. As an investigation into the theatrical traditions of the Kwakwaka'wakw people, this paper must be viewed as a first step towards a larger investigation into Kwakwaka'wakw per-

formance utilizing semiotic theory as applied to theater. I have chosen to focus on a limited time period and specific data as a convenient starting point. Consequently, an investigation of contemporary Kwakwaka'wakw practices and their relationship to the past is outside the scope of this work except in general reference. Such a study deserves direct observation (rather than secondhand viewing via performance tapes) and discussions with performers, audience, and sponsors. In addition, any scholarly attempt to gain cultural insight, regardless of time frame, is self-limiting. Theater is just one aspect of the complex social and spiritual system of the Kwakwaka'wakw people, albeit a very rich one. In addition, semiotics as a theoretical tool seeks to uncover signs that are meaningful, not to reveal their meaning. No matter its accuracy, such a study cannot explain a culture and will generate more questions than answers.

The data for this paper is primarily taken from work among the Southern Kwakwaka'wakw by the anthropologist Franz Boas and George Hunt, a native Kwakwala speaker with whom Boas collaborated. This information forms the greatest single body of nineteenth-century data on Kwakwaka'wakw culture, obtained between 1886 (Boas' first trip to the Northwest) and approximately 1920. However, this material represents a narrow segment along a cultural time continuum which possessed its own history and continued to develop into the present. Theatrical ceremonies still take place among the people of the Northwest Coast and, although many traditions continue, much has changed.<sup>7</sup> Certain limitations in using Boas' results, even within their historical framework, must also be acknowledged.

As Manfred Pfister has pointed out, "verbal and non-verbal codes are to a varying degree strongly normative systems of rules which reflect the interests and needs of a particular society or social stratum."<sup>8</sup> This does not mean, however, that different levels of sign understanding do not exist within the community itself. Certain signified primary meanings may be evident to a relative newcomer to the culture, while other meta-significations may rely on a more intimate involvement in the life of the society or even on esoteric knowledge. In Boas' case, we have data necessarily derived from a limited number of sources and often tied to the position of George Hunt within Kwakwaka'wakw society.

Fort Rupert was built in 1849 by the Hudson's Bay Company, subsequently drawing four Kwakwaka'wakw communities to

the area. This community became the largest Kwakwaka'wakw settlement at that time and a regional ceremonial hub. The last manager and succeeding owner of the post was Robert Hunt, George's father. Due to George Hunt's contacts at Fort Rupert, as well as the community's size and importance, the Boasian data we have is closely linked to this historical phenomenon.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the information gathered by Hunt was processed by Boas himself.

In his work, Boas was attempting to preserve a "dying culture" and present it in its pristine form. Consequently, Boas rejected materials that he felt had been influenced by white culture. For example, one would never gather from reading the Boasian accounts that by the 1880s Western clothing styles were the general rule among the Kwakwaka'wakw or that they had greatly assimilated into the larger Canadian economy. The exclusion of such information provides an artificial timelessness to Boas' data. In addition, the general lessening of warfare and the greater social interaction fostered by the Fort Rupert migrations led to an increase in the complexities of the theatrical/ceremonial system.<sup>10</sup> It was a system in flux, not the fixed program reported by Boas. Another consideration is the use of specific myths. Like dances and associated arts, narratives were the property of individuals and families; consequently, a single one does not necessarily reflect the beliefs or attitudes of the general population. Like people, such stories follow differing lines of descent, resulting in contextual fluidity of narrative. At the same time, themes, events, and concepts can be found in a large number of these myths. Used judiciously, the work of Hunt and Boas contains enough information to allow for a preliminary investigation of the nature of Kwakwaka'wakw theatrical spatial signs on various levels.

At the turn of the century Kwakwaka'wakw performances were primarily staged in physical association with the houses of extended families (figure 1); thus, the house structure functioned both as residence and theater. Each production was somewhat unique in the components—text, choreography, improvisation, magic, and spectacle—chosen to be performed by the sponsoring chiefs from the repertoire to which they or the performers had rights. New songs would also be composed for the occasion. Performances were linked to other activities such as mourning ceremonies, marriages, rites of initiation, feasting, and the distribution of goods called potlatching. In myth the most important gifts given to an ancestor were the

rights to various dance forms of the Winter Ceremonial, or *t'seka*.<sup>11</sup> And just as the actors had their roles, so too did the audience; audience participation was required. By their presence and acceptance, the viewers validated the performers' and sponsors' rights to the dances and associated arts. This role as notary established an active, rather than passive, engagement between the viewer and the viewed. In addition, the roles might be reversed as different families would come forward to present their performances, their legacy. The performance, allied to sponsor, performers, and audience, became a complex sign system in itself. The house functioned as one venue in which signs were contained and displayed.

### THE THEATRICAL SEASON

The Kwakwaka'wakw house was lived in throughout the year, but most consistently during the winter, since people were often found at fishing or hunting camps in the summer. The wet winters along the Northwest Coast, with the subsequent decline in salmon runs and edible plants, often kept people close to their homes, and so during this season the individual residence more commonly underwent the spatial transformations which rendered it into a theater.<sup>12</sup>

The metamorphosis of the house was produced via changes in the physical layout within the building and by the character of the performances that took place there. The special nature of Western theatrical exhibition is signified by "clearly distinguishing performers and spectators, by emphasizing the differences between drama and more specifically economic forms of productivity, by suspending the temporal and spatial relationships of ordinary everyday life, and, finally, by implementing special rules and conventions."<sup>13</sup> In Kwakwaka'wakw theater, the division between the role of performer and spectator was sometimes blurred. At the same time, economic, social, and regulatory signs were strongly in force.

The Kwakwaka'wakw relied primarily on the sea for their livelihood, and fishing—still of great economic importance to the Kwakwaka'wakw today—was a summer activity.<sup>14</sup> In the warmer months a great deal of effort was also expended collecting berries and preserving various foodstuffs. Although winter was not a time totally devoid of subsistence activity, it was a period of quiescence in terms of productivity or direct

exploitation of resources.<sup>15</sup> This does not mean that all forms of economic activity were abandoned. Tremendous amounts of food and other goods changed hands during public presentations in potlatches and trade. Accordingly, a shift to the utilization of those assets developed during the summer months, and theater was linked to the tertiary economics of potlatching rather than primary subsistence activities or secondary trade.

The shift in economics was joined by a suspension of summer social relationships. In November, people would take on new names and those who possessed similar dance rights would be grouped together. According to Boas, "at the time of the beginning of the winter ceremonial the social system is completely changed."<sup>16</sup> In actuality there was little difference in the resulting rank order; those of high social position usually held the rights to important dances and paraphernalia.<sup>17</sup> The differences occurred more in the mechanisms by which kinship and social position were determined. Although little reorganization may have been effected, the concept of a time removed from the everyday was still strong. Taking on and using different names during winter comprises only one category of special rules and conventions in force during the season; the people no longer sang summer songs, food at feasts had to be consumed rapidly, and behavior was rigidly controlled at theatrical events. In addition, the villages in which theater performances took place possessed a special status during the ceremonial season.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the performances were of two general types: *f'seka* and *tta'sala*. *T'seka* are initiation presentations in which the main dancer exhibits his or her newly inherited ranked privileges. To ensure compliance of regulations, Fool and Grizzly Bear dancers often functioned as police during exhibitions.<sup>18</sup> The Grizzly Bear Society was also responsible for the guarding of the theater before performances.<sup>19</sup> The *tta'sala* ceremonies (sometimes inaccurately called Summer Dances) were lower in status than the *f'seka* and had to be performed in the secular season, functioning as a means of displaying inherited family crest images. The two performance cycles involved different participants, different houses as theaters, and a time gap between them. Today, the *f'seka* and *tta'sala* are often performed on a single night in the same house by identical performers. However, the dancers set aside their special names and segregate the dance forms.<sup>20</sup> An analysis of Boas' data suggests that all the singular practices and rules for

the diverse ceremonials functioned as signs which marked the theatrical season as special and of great importance. One of the principle effects of these activities was the reinforcement of significations which were present in the spatial organization of the Kwakwaka'wakw house, village, and surrounding landscape.

## THE VILLAGE

The Northwest coastal lands consist primarily of a narrow strip of beach with forest coming down almost to the water's edge. Kwakwaka'wakw houses were built in a row, facing seaward (figure 2). With edges defined by differences in surface, ecology, and usage, the community environment can be divided into several districts: the village proper, the sea, the beach, and the forest.<sup>21</sup> Each of these functioned as performance venues. In Kwakwaka'wakw myth, the forest and the sea are the abodes of supernatural beings or spirits, where many inhabit their own houses. In turn, the beach village is populated by humans in the summer, and by humans and spirits in the winter.<sup>22</sup> A distinction between village and sea could be seen in the actions of those sent to invite guests to a performance cycle. At the end of the nineteenth century, the inviters would arrive by canoe to present their invitation speeches while remaining in the boat. In the past, after the speeches were completed, the emissaries were brought ashore to be honored with a ritual meal. Today, invitations may be sent by word of mouth, through relatives and friends, or delivered by mail. Both the sea and the forest are cut by many paths which must be learned in order to be utilized correctly by hunters and fishermen. The district which is the village itself has the main boulevard as a path.

The village was the basic social unit vis-à-vis the external world. Inter-village war took place, with different communities acting independently of one another.<sup>23</sup> Such warfare was one means of obtaining the rights to various visual images, stories, and performances. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, armed warfare was a thing of the past. Boas quotes one elder saying, "Now we fight with button blankets and other kinds of property, and we smile at each other!"<sup>24</sup> Yet much of this economic and social competition was still directed toward members of outside villages. In the ceremonies observed by Boas at Fort Rupert in 1894, the rivalry was between a chief of

the hosting Kwakwaka'wakw community and that of the invited Gʷsgimaxw and the 'Nakwaxda'xw.<sup>25</sup> The physical village, although a district, functioned as a landmark, evidencing the beach district. As landmark, the village also signified the importance of the site and the populace living there. However, the unique location of the village also established it as a place of intersection. All such locations are imbued with tension and potential significance.

The Kwakwaka'wakw village is located at an intersection, with the sea and forest coming into closest contact along the narrow beach. The importance of the shore as contact point was acknowledged through the placement there of "welcoming figures" (figure 3). These carved wooden statues were positioned on the beach in front of the theater, facing the water. Here they would beckon to guests arriving via canoe and mark the individual performance house. As both departure point and destination, the village was at the intersection of forest and ocean paths, where the exceptional carried over into everyday existence as objectified in theatrical performance. The community was the place where the most intense of social interaction developed, where the Kwakwaka'wakw defined and expressed who they were in contrast to the outside world.

Although the village provided the basic community structure, populations were further subdivided. This division was the 'na'mima, "the ultimate units, bound together by strict social obligations."<sup>26</sup> The 'na'mima was composed of a principal chief, subordinate chiefs, commoners, and their families. Leaders relied on this group when committing themselves and their resources to sponsor theatrical performances.<sup>27</sup> The head chief was viewed as the descendant of the founding ancestor, inheriting both power and prerogatives. However, other families within the larger group may have had their own unique origins.<sup>28</sup> In Boas' time, each 'na'mima resided in its own segment of the community, dividing the village itself into smaller districts.<sup>29</sup> Each possessed one or more plank houses in the village and several seasonal sites, controlling access to particular resources. The chief was responsible for the management of 'na'mima assets and for relations with other 'na'mimas. In this latter regard, holders of additional hereditary offices were available to assist. These included an orator who spoke for the family at public events and songwriters who composed performance music in praise of their high chief. Guests would be invited by an assembler or master of ceremonies while a name-

keeper kept track of the ranked titles both within and outside the 'na'mima.<sup>30</sup> Each title was associated with particular appellations and possessed certain privileges, while rank was reflected in the seating arrangements at theatrical ceremonial events and dictated the order in which holders were served at feasts or received public gifts.

In any particular year, extremely expensive theatrical activity centered on one or more landmark houses. Since any house could be used as a theater, the localization of performances says a great deal concerning the hosting chief, his immediate family, and the 'na'mima. Just as the ceremonials reflect and enhance the social position of the host who is paying for the presentation, so too they influence the rank and status of the larger group whose resources are utilized. Through the activities of the 'na'mima, social awareness is focused on a specific part of the village and its inhabitants for the period of the performances.

Although theatrical activities tended to cluster, there was no clear, permanent demarcation between the theater district and other areas of the village. This lack of distinct boundaries is emphasized by the simultaneous use of several houses for individual segments of the *f'seka* or the less prestigious *tta'sala*, and the possibility of numerous events with different sponsors. The use of concurrent multiple sites and the possibility that any house could serve as stage, suggest the efficacy of considering the Kwakwaka'wakw village as theater complex. In this light, any individual building becomes one unit in a larger construct. The clustering of theaters provided a more heightened emphasis through the reiteration of basic themes of status and power, themes which were engendered in the spatial and decorative aspects of the individual building.

### THE RESIDENTIAL HOUSE

The village itself can be thought of as a text and the specific structures within it as individual modules which can be further subdivided. According to Boas, in tales of everyday life the chief's house was always placed in the center of the village row.<sup>31</sup> Since the houses of the most wealthy and influential were more likely to be utilized as theaters, this prominent positioning would both enhance and signify the importance of the performance structure. However, while Boas considered these

tales as indicative of earlier spatial organization, he gives no direct data to suggest that such an arrangement was the norm in actual village communities. Instead, each house was differentiated first by its own name. The appellation was the signifier while the structure itself, on the primary level, was the signified. The name stands for the landmark and exposes the building to subsequent connotations. In addition, both the house and its title signified the extended family. While individual, physical structures might decay with time and be replaced, the name remained as a mark of familial prerogative and prestige. In much the same way, the name Paris Opera refers not just to a specific building, but to a host of other concepts concerning art, French culture, and social position. An example of this for the Kwakwaka'wakw is the house "So-Large-That-One-Can-Not-Look-From-One-Corner-Across-to-the-Other."

A story linked to the structure tells how the name was bestowed by "the great transformer, who, it is said, made two houses of dirt, one for himself, one for his brother."<sup>32</sup> The structures grew large when the builder breathed upon them. As a sign the house's title embodies several signifieds. The name itself indicates a huge structure, at least conceptually. As a dwelling-place the Kwakwaka'wakw house was a signifier of social position, the largest building belonging to the greatest chiefs.<sup>33</sup> Consequently, this name denotes political and social prestige. The use of certain names, as well as images and dances, is a privilege obtained through inheritance, gift, or war. Such prerogatives are coupled with a narrative that relates how the warrant was obtained. Every member of the community may not know the exact story associated with the house's name, but all would recognize the use of the appellation as a statement of the prerogatives of the residing family. The marking of the residence and thus the theater as both landmark and public declaration of family or personal status, was also fashioned in the decoration of the facade.

Like the name, the artwork embellishing the front of the great nineteenth-century Kwakwaka'wakw houses was a matter of inheritance (figure 2). These paintings and carvings also indicated the boundary or edge between the interior and exterior formed by the theater walls. The separation of areas delimited different districts which were also distinguished by entrance restrictions; only invited guests penetrated the interior of the performance house. Certain families and individuals possessed

exclusive rights to specific visual images via birth, marriage, warfare, and—by Boas' time—purchase. The display of such images was a public statement of those rights. "Whatever the tradition of the clan may be, the figures with which house and implements are ornamented refer to this legend [of how the rights to their use was obtained]." <sup>34</sup> Boas recounts several such traditions. In one, a young man encounters a group of killer whales that have taken on human shape in order to mend their canoes. From the killer whale chief, the youth receives a quartz-point whaling harpoon, new names, and the right to depict the killer whale on his house facade. <sup>35</sup>

Boas includes a drawing of a housefront depicting two bears flanking the door. The image was obtained by an ancestor and is the crest of the extended family. Between the bears is a circle surrounding the entrance, which represents the moon. Within the ring above the door is an ancestor who, the story tells us, was taken on a lunar journey. The moon and figure are the family insignia of the mother of the house owner. <sup>36</sup> Often the facade painting was so arranged that the door of the house was positioned in either the mouth or stomach of one of the images. In some structures, the door was constructed as an actual mouth that moved, snapping shut behind any who entered (figure 1). <sup>37</sup> Facade decorations such as these, in signifying the prerogatives of the owner, are a public statement directed to the outside. The facade itself separates the public exterior space from the private interior zone, at the same time functioning to differentiate the individual building from the others situated along the village street. <sup>38</sup>

Besides facade decoration, occasionally heraldic poles marked a house or theater as different from neighboring structures. Data indicate that the carving of fully sculpted, freestanding poles among the Kwakwaka'wakw developed in the late nineteenth century. <sup>39</sup> By 1900 many villages displayed them. However, the staging of potlatches for pole raisings has been done only rarely since 1937. <sup>40</sup> These posts display familial crests and may be in honor of a deceased relative. <sup>41</sup> They are often raised in association with and to commemorate various events including the completion of a house. For example, at the end of a festival given in honor of his father, a son erected a memorial column. On this pole were represented four men, the crest of the deceased's family. Above the four men on the pole was the sea bear, on his back three fins with human faces. According to legend, the right to this image was given to the family by a sea

monster who dragged four brothers down into his underwater home. Along with the sea bear crest, the brothers received the rights to the kettles Lukewarm, Warm, Hot, and Boiling and a ringed hat in the shape of a sea monster. Together with these objects were included their songs.<sup>42</sup> The sea bear image is linked to the tale and so as signifier functions as an index to other signs such as the four kettles and hat. Each of these in turn signifies prerogatives and family status. By their depiction of familial crests, the poles and facade paintings both reflect and enhance the power and standing of the individual who builds the house. At the same time that they indicate the specific chiefly ancestry of the owner and denote the importance of those that reside within, the art forms signify the special nature of the landmark and the theatrical events which take place within its walls.

### HOUSE AS THEATER

Although the depiction of crest prerogatives marked individual Kwakwaka'wakw theaters as unique, their use was not limited to the ceremonials. Such artworks also functioned as an extra-theatrical sign system. Consequently, during the performance season, such signs would not differentiate between houses in which presentations were taking place and those which were purely residential. However, the actual location of performances was often marked on the theater exterior. The door was sometimes "surrounded by a ring of hemlock branches which is covered by eagle down, so that everyone who steps into the house must pass through it."<sup>43</sup> The simple appending of an otherwise missing element distinguished the theater from the residence, giving the building an additional albeit temporary landmark status. The ornament, by its positioning at the single opening in the facade, also marked the boundary between the interior and exterior spaces resulting from the physical structure of the building. The ring functions as an index of the performance within the house. However, the use of the hemlock and eagle down materials allows for an increased number of connotations.

Hemlock branches were used in ritual bathing for purification, often the body being rubbed with twigs until blood was drawn.<sup>44</sup> It was said that the actions prepared the individual for the coming of a spirit.<sup>45</sup> Hemlock was also used to make head,

neck, waist, and ankle bands for the audience of *Hamat'sa* initiation performances (figure 4). The object of these ceremonies was to display rights newly acquired by the *Hamat'sa*. The basic plot is the return of the youth, who has been kidnapped and taken to the forest home of *Baxwbakwalanuxwsiwe'*, "Man-Eater-of-the-North-End-of-the-World."<sup>46</sup> There the initiate learned the secrets of this supernatural being and became a wild cannibal. "[When] he has returned in a state of ecstasy, [the people attempt] to exorcise the spirit which possesses him and to restore him from his holy madness. These objects are attained by songs and dances."<sup>47</sup> The performances were sponsored by the novice's father, often in conjunction with the return of the marriage debt by the maternal grandfather.

After the initiate was captured, the people removed the hemlock branches with which they were adorned, throwing them into the fire. "This is called smoking the wildness of *Baxwbakwalanuxwsiwe'* out of the *Hamat'sa*."<sup>48</sup> The novice, when in his "wild state," was dressed in hemlock garb: head, neck, and waist rings, bracelets, and anklets.<sup>49</sup> By the time the *Hamat'sa* was "re-civilized," the clothing of hemlock had been replaced by red cedar bark plaited into rings (figure 5), which were usually comprised of simple shredded then twisted cedar bark. However, for important individuals they were often finely plaited of hundreds of strands of the red material. In turn, the cedar bark garb of the *Hamat'sa* was replaced by a dance apron and bird headdress. Within the initiation, the hemlock signifies the wild, non-human elements of the Kwakwaka'wakw world. When used as an ornament or in ritual purification, hemlock conveys associations of extraordinary states of existence. The shredded cedar bark, dyed red with alder, was also a mark of the exceptional nature of the winter rituals, and its use was restricted to this time. The material functioned as such an important sign that the entire winter theatrical period was often called the "Red Cedar Bark Season" and the *f'seka*, the "Red Cedar Bark Ceremony." As such this material was distributed at the beginning of the theatrical ceremonies and neck rings of the material were worn by select individuals in addition to the *Hamat'sa*. Connotations of the unusual were also engendered in the use of down.

Down was a major component of costumes or props in almost all performances, and was also reported to be an important component in shamanic curing. During theatrical presentations, down was carried in special dishes, scattered about, and

placed on the heads of the audience. In the *tta'sala*, these light feathers floated out of the dancer's headdress. The movements consisted of quick jumps and rhythmic head bobbing. The use of such rare and expensive material indicated the wealth and prestige of the sponsoring family and the singularity of the events taking place. When found in the *Hamat'sa* performances, "the master of ceremonies says that the eagle down brought into the house supernatural power (which is not supposed to be present when there is no down)."<sup>50</sup> The feathers were also placed on the heads of newborn twins, their parents, on the mother's bed, and the two cradles.<sup>51</sup> Twin children were associated with the Salmon and their birth was considered a wonderful event, for they were believed to be endowed with supernatural power.<sup>52</sup> Like the hemlock, the presence of eagle down on the door ornament signifies the exceptional nature of the theatrical events with which it is associated and of the space which contains those events. The singular character of the theater is clearly stated through the complementary primary signification of these two materials.

A ring of hemlock and down similar to that used to mark the theater as a landmark was also employed by shamans in curing practices. When a man's soul was positioned incorrectly, the shaman fashioned a large circlet and lowered it over the head of the kneeling patient. When the ring reached the knees, the sufferer rose and stepped out of the circle, right foot first.<sup>53</sup> Thus, the soul was realigned and the patient cured. At the beginning of the *f'seka* a large circular coil of cedar bark was held by four men while a woman stood within. She would cut the ring, which was then unraveled and pieces distributed to the audience. Today, owing to the scarcity of material, a large heirloom cedar bark coil may be paraded before the assemblage, but often is not cut up for distribution.

In the past, when audience members entered the theater, they passed a band of hemlock placed around the door. As they stepped through, the guests would turn so that the right foot advanced first. The hemlock and eagle down ornament, and the behavior exhibited when passing through it, implied a more specific signification than that of singular space and event, or the edge between two districts. Rather, the association of sign systems effected a statement vis-à-vis the very nature of theater. Here is a place where people and events are transformed, revealed, reaffirmed.<sup>54</sup>

The acknowledgment of the theater as a place for transformation is supported by several terms associated with the Winter Ceremonial. The word *f'seka* is used for the ceremonies themselves. Boas defines this word as meaning to be fraudulent or to cheat, suggesting the theatrical nature of the ceremonial events. In *Bella Bella* this term signifies both the Winter Ceremonial and a shaman.<sup>55</sup> Among the Kwakwaka'wakw, the performers themselves are called *paxala* or shaman.<sup>56</sup> Such visual and linguistic correspondence does not mean that the theatrical performances were themselves shamanic, but that associations derived from a shamanic context may have had an impact on the sign system of the Kwakwaka'wakw theater. If so, the extraordinary nature of the performances and their spatial container were primary significations informed by this link. The concept of transformation would be a more esoteric, higher level intimation of the basic signs. In touching on the arguments concerning the location within the cathedral of the early medieval liturgical Easter plays, Carlson noted that "dramatic presentation is built upon the connotations already present in a space created for nondramatic purposes."<sup>57</sup> Just as some theatrical visual signs seem to utilize elements derived from a shamanic-based system, so too extra-theatrical spatial organization of the house had an impact on the theatrical presentations performed there.

## HOUSE PLAN AND ORGANIZATION

In the late eighteenth century the Kwakwaka'wakw house was a shed-roofed structure. By the end of the nineteenth century, in Boas' time, the primary design consisted of flanking pitched roofs and plank walls, sometimes of milled lumber. Also in evidence were painted facades and exterior carvings—features not found early in the century. Typically a square plan of post and lintel construction, the house sides ranged from forty to sixty feet in length.<sup>58</sup> The single front entrance was centered in the facade, facing the sea. The Kwakwaka'wakw utilized three types of framework in these structures employing two, three, or four central posts.<sup>59</sup> Boas only discusses the last of these in any detail. The fabrication of this style of house began with the placement of the four large posts, two flanking the future entrance, two in the corresponding position at the other end (figure 6). Often the four carved support columns, with or

without crossbeams, were spoken of as mythic gifts from a spirit to the founding ancestor. In Boas' time both the posts and the beams they supported were often carved with crest images.<sup>60</sup> The number four is basic to many Kwakwaka'wakw sign systems. Dances, ritual actions, songs, supernatural gifts: All these and more are patterned in groups of four. The columns and their crossbeams provided the foundation for the rest of the house framing.

When framing was complete, a dirt mound was raised along the inner perimeter of the house to support the walls. In the interior, a platform was constructed over the pile resulting in a raised living area with a central, earth-floored depression. In the house as theater, this wooden level was used to provide audience seating. In Boas' time, some houses had ten interior platforms, resulting in an amphitheater effect. In the largest homes, two to four layers were not uncommon, suggesting that the theatrical function of the interior space was given more weight than the residential aspects. In all cases, a series of steps led up to the door and then down into the house.<sup>61</sup> How this interior was organized as a residence had an impact on the utilization and significance of that same space as a theater.

The interior space of the house was designated by the identical terms used for the human body, the rear of the building being the forehead. The rooms of the 'na'mima chief were placed in this section of the house. The Kwakwaka'wakw word for chief is *gigame'*; *gi* refers to both the forehead and canoe prow. Calling the rear of the house the forehead associates it with the chief. The rear of the house was also labeled upriver, while the front was downriver.<sup>62</sup> *Upriver* is the term designating north, the abode of the man-eating spirit Baxwbakwalanuxsiwe' and the Warrior of the World Winalagalis, two of the most important and powerful supernatural beings associated with the Winter Ceremonial.<sup>63</sup> The linking of upriver, north, and powerful spirits lends emphasis to the positioning of the chief's rooms at the rear of the structure, for he is the highest-ranking, most powerful individual in the household. The linguistic signs mark this locality as an area of great social importance and a notable landmark within the interior domestic space.

The next ranking location, after the back, was the righthand side of the house (looking in from the door). This was followed by the left and then the front. The living arrangement reflected this conceptual image in the positioning of rooms relative to

the rank of the nuclear family within the larger household hierarchy. Slaves were relegated to positions just flanking the entrance.<sup>64</sup> Although this ranking suggests a fairly rigid organization, there was some fluidity in determining who would be positioned where and in the larger spatial construct in which the more fixed points were marked. The formal distribution of food at feasts was also regulated by hierarchy, both in the recipient's rank and in the type of foodstuffs. A feast dish representing Dzunukwa, the wild woman of the woods, collected by Hunt in 1902, has a series of removable sections which correspond to specific parts of her anatomy (figure 7).<sup>65</sup> These were used to feed individuals according to their rank: first the head, next the right breast, then the left, on down the body. The spatial hierarchy of living arrangements had its counterpart in the audience seating arrangement during performances.

#### THEATER SEATING ORGANIZATION

The seating organization at performances reflected the status considerations of Kwakwaka'wakw culture. The arrangement was based on the rank of individual dance associations and the relative ranking within each society. During the *Hamat'sa* ceremonies, the Seal Society, whose members had been previously initiated, had the prestigious seats at the rear of the house. The highest-ranking *Hamat'sa* had the premier seat in the middle of the back, surrounded by fellow cannibal dancers (figure 5). Just as in myth the greatest chief's house was centered in the village, the most prestigious member of an organization was placed at the midpoint of his group. At both sides of the *Hamat'sas* sat the other Seals including the Bear Society. The singers gathered before this assembly. The positions of other societies were determined in a similar manner. The uninitiated sat to the direct left of the door at the front of the house, a location corresponding to the slaves' position within a residence. These common people were excluded from some types of performances and attendance was by invitation. The host and his family could be found at the right front corner.<sup>66</sup>

The sense of rivalry and relative ranking is perhaps most evident when outsiders were invited to performances. Two seating arrangements were common under these circumstances. In one, all the members of the guest tribe sat at the sides of the house toward the front, thus placed in lower-ranking positions

than the home village. In the second configuration, the groups corresponding to the Kwakwaka'wakw Seal Society sat with their counterparts in the rear of the house. However, relative positioning was also evident here. The Kwakwaka'wakw *Hamat'sas* were central with the guests flanking them, while the other members were arranged in rows with the Kwakwaka'wakw occupying the tier furthest to the back of the house. A significant break in the residential hierarchy pattern was the presence of the host family in the front righthand corner. This spot was called the kettle corner and signified the function of the sponsor as the provider of the feasts given during the ceremonies. This idiosyncratic arrangement tends to emphasize more fully the conventional nature of the rest of the seating, drawing attention to both the expressed hierarchy and the unique prestige of the host. Through its arrangement the audience space was far from neutral, but was manipulated in a powerful assertion of social reality. This active element in the audience space links it conceptually to the equally semantically active performance space.<sup>67</sup>

### THE PERFORMANCE SPACE

The stage section of the Kwakwaka'wakw theater had, as its domestic counterpart, the dirt-floored central space. During non-performance periods, this precinct was divided into separate areas or districts by pole frameworks, providing the boundary between each family. There were four cooking fires on the ground, one at each corner, surrounded by sitting planks or a large settee (figure 8). The house set aside for performances was called *lubakw* which means "emptied," cleared of all the accouterments of everyday living. Personal items were removed and all central partitions taken down. Both the term and the clearing of the space functioned as signs of the unique character of performance time and the theater itself. Instead of four fires with seats, a single central blaze was lit. Using a single fluctuating basis of illumination resulted in a rather poorly defined visual field, causing the shadows to move, with individual areas lost in darkness. Such lighting added an air of secrecy, expectation, and tension to the performance space,<sup>68</sup> unifying an expanse visually by excluding specifically defined areas of light. Around this fire, dividers were then constructed, resulting in a reorganization of interior spatial arrangements

through the establishment of new interior landmarks, edges, and districts.<sup>69</sup>

After the removable house partitions were taken out, the back of the theater was separated from the larger public space by a screen (figure 9). The audience was seated on or near the platform around the perimeter of the central area. It was on this dirt floor that performances were acted out, where actors confronted audience. Long planks, used by the singers as percussion instruments, were positioned between the back screen and the fire. Secret passages and chambers were dug under the floor to allow for the legerdemain of the *tuxw'id* dancer and other special effects. The interior was thus arranged to include audience, performance, transition, and preparation spaces. The organization of these diverse spaces established the conditions in which the basic theatrical dialectic of viewer versus viewed was manipulated in Kwakwaka'wakw terms. The reconstruction of the house interior, in effect, converted the real domestic space into an iconic theatrical space.<sup>70</sup>

"Anything whatever, be it quality, existent individual, or law, is an Icon of anything, in so far as it is like that thing and used as a sign of it."<sup>71</sup> The Kwakwaka'wakw stage was not just the space where the taming of the *Hamat'sa* or the initiation of the novices was recreated, but where it actually occurred; the arena possessed iconic identity. At the same time, the theater retained a connection with the residential space from which it was fashioned in that both shared the same overall dimensions and permanent structural elements. This last includes the basic framing of the house, the wooden surrounding platform, the house posts, and any individual bedrooms. By its physical existence the theater is also a sign of that previous function. It is accordingly an index (deictic sign) of the house as domicile. This plurality of signification or semiotic flexibility provides a dynamic component which derives from the structure itself.<sup>72</sup> The result of the intertwining of spatial icon and index is perhaps most strongly evident in the performance roles which were acted out in that space.

As is not uncommon in performances where space has iconic identity, there are characters who have this quality. The *Hamat'sa* initiate played a role which was, at the same time, him or herself. Iconicity is most lacking in the performance of various mythic beings—the costume may be icon, but not the human dancer. In this case, the characteristics of the role are indices or deictic signs that attain their meaning from a con-

tiguous relationship to that which they depict. The relationship can be kinetic, in that this is the way Salmon moves. It can also be visual; the costumes and masks of the performers physically resemble the character or its raiment. Such visual correlation was codified in Kwakwaka'wakw plastic and graphic arts. The integration of spatial or character icon and index provides for a constant shifting of reality within the performance space from that which is actually there to that which is represented. I suggest that the impact of Kwakwaka'wakw theatricals derived in part from the active interplay of iconic and deictic elements as well as the utilization of a spatial system which included extra-theatrical signs. The implicit partitioning of the performance space by the dancers also contributed to the intensity of the theatrical event.<sup>73</sup>

### COMPONENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE SPACE

Although the numerous dances varied in stance, tempo, and gesture, certain elements were common to almost all. Most involved four circuits around the fire, in a counterclockwise direction. Each time the performer reached the points flanking the door or the rear of the theater, he or she paused, made a single complete turn to the left, and continued along the circular path.<sup>74</sup> For the Nułamał (Fool Dancer), the dance was clockwise rather than counter, with turns to the right not left. Underscoring this reversal of choreography, the Nułamał is filthy, trying to tear and soil the clothing of those he comes in contact with. His mask exhibits a huge nose that constantly runs with mucus. "They break canoes, houses, kettles, and boxes; in short, act the madman in every conceivable way."<sup>75</sup> Like the Grizzly Bears, the Fool Dancer helped to reinforce proper behavior in both audience and performers during ceremonies. Even though the Nułamał reverses the direction of movement, he maintains the same path as the other performers, the circle around the fire. Dzunułwa, who is viewed as clumsy and quite stupid, must be led by an attendant to prevent her from circling to the left.<sup>76</sup> The circuitous movement of the dancers divides the performance space into interior and exterior districts, at the same time emphasizing the boundary itself. Like the edges which define the various districts of the Kwakwaka'wakw environment, the dancers' line suggests that different qualities exist outside and within the performance cir-



FIG. 1. HOUSE IN ALERT BAY, 1909. PHOTO BY HARLAN I. SMITH. NEG. NO. 46014. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



FIG. 2. NEW VANCOUVER, 1900 (UPPER). BLUNDEN HARBOR, 1899 (LOWER). PHOTOS BY CHARLES F. NEWCOMBE. NEG. NO. 337842. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



FIG. 3. WELCOMING POST, ALERT BAY, 1909. PHOTO BY HARLAN I. SMITH. NEG. NO. 46013. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



*FIG. 4. RETURN OF THE Hamat'sa, ALERT BAY, 1894. PHOTO BY FRANZ BOAS OR O. C. HASTINGS. NEG. NO. 336127. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY*



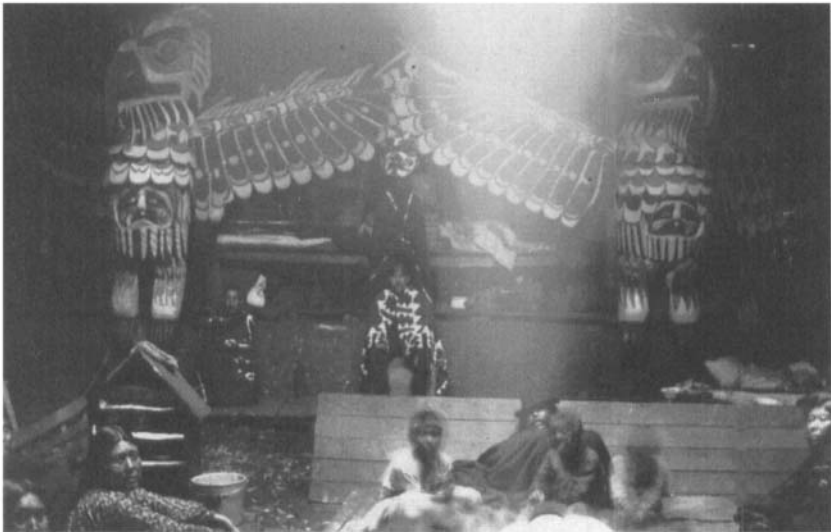
*FIG. 5. CANNIBAL SOCIETY MEMBERS, FORT RUPERT, 1894. PHOTO BY O. C. HASTINGS. NEG. NO. 336121. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY*



FIG. 6. INTERIOR HOUSE POSTS, c. 1900. PHOTO BY CHARLES F. NEWCOMBE. NEG. NO. 328744. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



FIG. 7. DZUNU'WA FEAST BOWLS. NEG. NO. 337824. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



*FIG. 8. HOUSE EXTERIOR, NEW VANCOUVER (UPPER). HOUSE INTERIOR (DIFFERENT STRUCTURE), NEW VANCOUVER, c. 1900 (LOWER). PHOTOS BY CHARLES F. NEWCOMBE. NEG. NO. 337837. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY*



*FIG. 9. DANCERS AT CHICAGO COLUMBIA EXPOSITION, 1893. NEG. NO. 338325. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY*



*FIG. 10. HAMAT'SA EMERGING FROM MAWIZ STAGED AT CHICAGO COLUMBIA EXPOSITION, 1893. COURTESY DEPT. OF LIBRARY SERVICES, AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY*

cle just as different qualities are found within the traditional Western stage and audience spaces. The use of defined, contained space as sign can be found in many facets of Kwakwaka'wakw myth and performance, including the Winter Ceremonial.

As described by Boas, the Winter Ceremonial was divided into two main parts which he termed major and minor. The performers were designated to one or the other based on their level of initiation. They were accordingly called by the terms *Gone-through* or *Not-Gone-Through*. The dancers in the minor ceremonial were also called *Being-at-the-House-Front*, the least prestigious area. This was explained to Boas as meaning that the former group had passed through the house of the Man-Eater, while the latter had not entered, but simply leaned up against the outer wall.<sup>77</sup> Those who penetrate the interior are of greater status than those who remain outside. The titles *Gone-Through* and *Not-Gone-Through* indicate the importance of interior, contained space while *Being-at-the-House-Front* is concerned with the defined edge of that space. In other examples, the circular aspect of certain edges was emphasized:

Songs sung during the *Hamat'sa* ceremonies describe the activity of the initiate as she or he travels about searching for food, a circular movement which also delimits inside and outside. Truly! He goes around the whole world, the great Hamatsa, looking for food everywhere, the great Hamatsa, on both sides of the world. Truly! He wants to eat plenty, the great Hamatsa. He is trying to eat all himself, the great Hamatsa, but he did not reach the food that he was going to obtain at the edge of the world.<sup>78</sup>

The initiate did not just experience the world; his movements defined it within the theatrical context. His path became the rim of existence, excluding the outside. The lavish attention given to the carving of feast dishes and boxes and their role as containers of riches also underscores the importance of defined interior and exterior space. Here the visual emphasis is on the boundary that is the container itself. The house walls also function in this way; the embellished facade is the border between the outside world and the building interior. In a similar way, the platform edge within the theater provides a potential physical boundary between the interior stage area and the exterior audience seating.<sup>79</sup>

## THE MERGING OF PERFORMANCE AND AUDIENCE SPACE

Structurally, the presentation area within the house would seem to have been clearly delineated from the spectator space, such as in the proscenium stage. However, the nature of the performances themselves tended to blur the distinction. It was common for individual members of the audience to participate in the production to varying degrees. In some ceremonies, songs were sung by all present, not just by the performers. Several characters such as the Fool Dancer engaged the audience by biting, tearing clothes, or throwing coals. All those so injured were paid compensation. Seal Society members both participated in and observed the performances. The Grizzly Bears had their own dance, but when not performing they sat with the other Seals ready to punish any transgression by dancer or observer.<sup>80</sup> "Shielding one's face from the heat of the fire, chewing gum and talking or laughing at inappropriate times were all considered offenses and were punished within the memory of middle-aged people. In later years the punishments took on a joking character, and today [1975] are only known in memory."<sup>81</sup> The policing methods underscore the confrontational aspects of actor-audience interaction.

Like the Bears, other performers also interacted directly with the audience, abolishing the fourth wall. The *'Ma' maKa* was a dancer who threw objects into the audience, carrying disease in the form of a worm which he tossed at the people. As the dancer made the motion of throwing, the people stooped, hiding under their blankets. In the fourth pass around the fire, the worm seemed to fly into individuals who ran toward the fire and collapsed, feigning death. Those who were "infected" by the dancer would have been contacted ahead of time and subsequently reimbursed for their performance. The victims were later "restored" to life.<sup>82</sup> The distinction between performer and audience was thus not a clear boundary, but rather a continuum, like a semi-permeable membrane. The movement across the membrane resulted in a larger interactive space within the theater. The lack of clear boundary was enhanced by the use of the single central fire and the resulting blurring of clear detail. The simultaneous presence of icon and deictic elements also contributed to the lack of sharp distinctions. Yet, as Edward Bullough has pointed out, distance between actor and audience is necessary for appreciation of the art of performance.<sup>83</sup> At the

same time that Kwakwaka'wakw viewers and performers began to merge spatially, certain physical points were emphasized and marked as unique to the performance. Such points of distance are evident in the actions of the dancers.

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTANCE

The choreography of most dances included pauses and turns at each side of the front and rear of the theater. These motions were not part of the actions of the general audience. When the *Hamat'sa* danced (accompanied by four of twelve assistants) the initiate bit one helper at each of these turning points. The dance actions served to emphasize the four specific locations in the performance space. Like the entry axis and the dance circle, the points are convergence points where various paths come together and different spaces intersect. Although variations exist in the choreographic pattern, an emphasis on the four "corners" generally remained constant. Whereas in a correct performance the dancer never intentionally reversed the established pattern for that particular dance, the pausing and turning generates the conceptual possibility of conscious variation, as if a decision must be made about the direction to follow. It is interesting that the likelihood of a performance error was greatest at these spots, either in turning the wrong way or by falling, mistakes that were considered quite grave. The members of the Seal Society watched carefully and physically battered the offender who had to atone via a costly initiation ceremony. Even if committed by members of the audience, errors had to be paid for in food, blankets, or other commodities. By their policing actions, the Kwakwaka'wakw acknowledged the fundamental importance of a precise exhibition and its resultant signs.<sup>84</sup>

The rigidly prescribed motions of the performers and their required turns helped to distance the observer from the observed. The costumes, masks, and intentionality of the actors and actresses also aided in distinguishing these two groups. Demonstrating family privileges by wearing masks and regalia, as well as by the songs and dances presented, separates the performers from the audience whose role is to validate the social prerogatives displayed. Differences in action and attire tend to counteract the strong merging of spectator and actor spaces that results from the blurring of roles. The simultaneous

conflation and separation of space results in a form of dramatic tension; one is never sure when a member of the audience will enter the spotlight or when a performer will retire to the audience.<sup>85</sup> Although performance nodes help to establish a dichotomy of function within the theater, they also mark points where different physical spaces or districts within the structure approach one another. This meeting of divergent areas was often marked by some sort of portal.

### PREPARATION AREAS AS CONCEIVED SPACE

In the domestic Kwakwaka'wakw house a single entrance at the front was most commonly used. In the theater there were two entrances: the main door and a secret opening in the back. The rear of the interior (and this opening) were covered by a special painted curtain, with or without the facade of a small room. These partitions created, in essence, a second exit from the stage area. The front and rear passages mark those points where paths cross the edges defined by the physical barrier of curtain or wall. The cloth and wood partitions not only served to mask backstage preparation, but defined the boundary between two semantically active spaces.

After the first *Hamat'sa* dance sequence was acted out in the theater, the performer retired to a small room set up in the rear of the house. This chamber (the *mawit*) was for the exclusive use of the novice and assistants. It represented the house of Baxwbakwalanuxwsiwe'. The facade of the *mawit* was embellished with motifs representing the Man-Eater or his servant Raven<sup>86</sup> (figure 10). The existence of this exclusive, secluded room conceptually corresponds to a similar structure often found in the Kwakwaka'wakw residence. When the house was not in use as a theater, a platform would sometimes be raised at the back of the house. Reached only by ladder, this was used by novices, hunters, and others who needed to take precautions against defilement.<sup>87</sup> As hidden spaces, the platform and the *mawit* were not directly encountered by the audience member, existing as isolated interior districts.

As the house of Man-Eater, the initiate's room was conceived rather than perceived space. It was an area which was experienced by the audience indirectly through verbal reference or auditory mediation.<sup>88</sup> The association of secular status, prestige, and power with the rear of the house reinforces the use of

conceived space to create dramatic tension. The existence and utilization of the area also allows for the interplay of the audience's imagination with the performance itself. It introduces a component, not just of the unknown, but of the unknowable, contributing to the dramatic impact of the production. The unique isolation of the *mawit* would have strengthened this impact whenever it was utilized. However, there were instances when the separate room was lacking.

The curtain alone was used in performances that did not involve the *Hamat'sa*. One example is the house of an adjunct chief who had agreed to have an offspring initiated and, accordingly, to host part of that season's Winter Ceremonial. This chief was not prepared for the position of sponsor, and so his house was not "emptied." Certain families stretched a sail or cloth across the rear of the house in lieu of a built wall, the Seal Society sitting before it. On the third and fourth nights of this ceremony, both male and female dancers performed. Those who had the right to wear masks as part of their dance did so. The dancers arranged themselves behind the curtain and soon began to emit the sounds specific to their individual character. The cloth was then lowered, revealing the performers. Dropping the curtain results in a conflation of the preparatory space with the performance space, a sudden integration of the conceived with the perceived. This merging of two different conceptual fields intensifies the climax of the moment when the partition is lowered. At the same time it destroys the unique psychological significance of the area behind the curtain by narrowing the distance between viewer and viewed. The unknown or unknowable factor is lessened. The transition from hidden to visual did not occur with the solid *mawit* wall, and so it retained its identity as conceived space.

The roof and sub-floor areas, like the performers' preparation rooms, were also conceived space. At certain times during the *Hamat'sa* performances, the novice, the intended captors, or various members of the Seal Society would be heard moving about the roof. In the performance rights of specific families, the initiate and fellow *Hamat'sas* descended into the theater by means of a single tree trunk called the Cannibal Pole. At other times, the dancers jumped through the smoke hole in the roof, appeared from backstage, or, rarely, through the front door. Sometimes the whistles that signified the spirits also seemed to emanate from the roof. In contrast, the ghost dancer and the magical *tuxw'id* appeared to sink into the ground. The latter

also conjured up a powerful *Sisiyuł*, a supernatural being who often takes the form of a double-headed serpent. The *Sisiyuł* image rose up out of the earth when the dancer called and gestured.<sup>89</sup> The ground was the place from which the voices of ghosts seemed to come, an effect achieved through the use of kelp-speaking tubes buried in the floor. The precise nature of this otherworldly place under the ground was left to the imagination of the audience as was the house interior of Man-Eater or the exact actions taking place on the roof. The dramatic power of these and other conceived spaces is in their hidden indefinite nature.

Besides the semiotic implications of hidden meaning, the isolation of the rear of the theater provided support space to prepare the actors for their roles. Yet this was not a single indeterminate area. The *mawit*, the section behind the curtain, and even previously existing bedrooms divided the precinct. The stipulation that only the novice and his helpers could utilize the *mawit* suggested a hierarchy of support spaces such as was found in the audience. The facade depiction of motifs associated with Baxwbakwalanuxwsiwe' or his minions further emphasized the distinction.

One element that unified the various support spaces was that each was a district isolated from the audience and reserved for performers. Unlike the stage, preparatory areas were non-confrontational as long as the separation or boundary with the audience remained intact. The edge where the non-confrontational support space contacts the confrontational performance area was defined by the physical line of curtain and facade, or by the roof and floor surfaces. The openings in the surfaces where these diametric domains came together were charged with dramatic intensity and significance. This can most clearly be seen in the facade of the *mawit*.

### INTERIOR EDGES AND NODES

In the designs linked to Baxwbakwalanuxwsiwe' or Raven, on the *mawit* an opening was fashioned at the mouth so that the *Hamat'sa* could enter the performance space (figure 10). Thus, the dancers appear as if vomited up by the spirit being. Many Kwakwaka'wakw myths and songs link the concept of regurgitation with wealth.<sup>90</sup> More relevant to the discussion of space is the specific use of the opening as an entryway. According to

Arnold van Gennep, "the door is the boundary between the foreign and domestic worlds in the case of an ordinary dwelling, between the profane and sacred worlds in the case of a temple. Therefore to cross the threshold is to unite oneself with a new world."<sup>91</sup> Regardless of one's interpretation of the religious or secular nature of Kwakwaka'wakw theater, the two spaces linked by the *Hamat'sa's* entryway were different in nature. The performance area was visibly accessible to all present, a place where actors and viewers came together, a perceived space. In contrast, the *mawit* was hidden away, restricted to a limited number of people, a clear area of performer-audience distinction, a conceived space. The link between these places—that is, the edge and its passageway—is saturated with meaning, for the entrance into a new world allows for a multitude of sign possibilities.

The concept of passing into a new world is also strongly evidenced in the main house entrance and the pole sometimes used by the *Hamat'sa* to descend into the theater from the roof. Like the opening in the *mawit* these apertures function as nodes where the outside and inside meet. The door was used by both performers and audience as a means of entering and leaving the reconstructed space of the theater. In some instances, a member of the audience would slip out through the secret back exit, only to reenter through the main portal as a performer. The importance of the front door was marked by the ritual of turning left and then stepping through the door with the right foot. Rattles were sometimes shaken to announce dancers as they passed the threshold, or boards were beaten as the audience entered.<sup>92</sup> The elaborate carving of the house posts at the entryway also characterized the passage as singular (figure 6). The carving and naming of such poles signifies their status as interior landmarks. Boas reports that in one house the front carved posts were called "Something-Talking-Inside" and "The-Orator."<sup>93</sup> The rear columns were designated "The-Braggart" and "Attempting-to-Talk-Louder-Than-Anybody-Else." Like the turning points in dances, such landmarks signify the importance of front and rear nodes. The decorated house facade where the entrance is situated has already been analyzed as a demarcation between divergent spaces: the public and the private. As the people moved through the door they entered a physically transformed region and were consequently themselves altered. They were no longer everyday people, but those chosen to validate the status of fellow community mem-

bers and other Kwakwaka'wakw. They were prepared to engage in the interplay between audience and actor. However, this was not an interplay that was restricted to the theater itself.

### VILLAGE DISTRICT AS THEATER

In the previous discussion, Kwakwaka'wakw theatrical performance space has been considered in terms of the physical structure of the building and the semiotic implications of drama production modifications. However, at least some of the performance activities were not confined to the house. These occurred on other sites in the theater district which was the Kwakwaka'wakw village. Such locations may or may not have been associated with specific landmarks, either natural or manmade. Integral pieces of the plot transpired on the beach, near the woods, and in the public spaces of the village itself.

When the *Hamat'sa* first left the woods, he or she was accompanied by audience members as well as other performers. As this group approached the theater, the host and family danced before the entrance. They were dressed in button blankets and red cedar bark ornaments, their faces marked with black spots, eagle down on their heads.<sup>94</sup> The dance occurred in front of the house facade whose decorations were a public statement of familial status and an assertion of familial rights. The performances in the interior of the theater were essentially private ones to which select members of the public had been invited. The dance before the house was a public gesture, played out in public territory at the edge between interior and exterior. Although such performances expanded the theatrical space beyond the confines of the building interior, they were still associated with the structure itself. Other ceremonies, however, were more removed from this central focus.

At the beginning of the Winter Ceremonial Season, and several times during this period, messengers were sent out to gather the people for performances. On November 19, 1894 Boas recorded this incident:

Early in the morning [the *Hamat'sas*], accompanied by the seal society, went from house to house, their faces blackened, and dressed in their various ornaments—the fool dancers with their lances, the bears with their enormous paws. The fool dancers knocked at the door with their lances. Then they entered and invited the people with the

same words as are used at ordinary occasions. But they did not raise their voices; they uttered the invitation in a low growling tone. Whenever the name of a person was mentioned the meaning of which in some way offended the bears, they pushed the speaker—one of the fool dancers—so that he almost fell down.<sup>95</sup>

During the day, the greater Seal Society remained in its dancing house while the Bear and Fool dancers would often go about chasing and mauling anyone they found abroad.<sup>96</sup> This is an example of audience participation, albeit unwilling. In all such events the dancers were impersonating the mannerisms of their character. Like the *Hamat'sa*, these characters were iconic in that they played themselves in their social role as initiated members of the dancing society. On November 24, a *tuxw'id* "captured" the power of the Winter Dances. She then traveled from house to house throwing this power into the people. By their movements throughout the village, the *tuxw'id* and the members of the Seal Society physically expanded the performance space. As the village now represents itself within the Winter Ceremonial, like the theater space, it too takes on a true iconic identity. In her examination of the *Corpus Christi York Cycle*, Scolnicov has also dealt with a theatrical ensemble which fills an entire town. "One finds here that the theatrical space and the theater space become coextensive, spreading out to the very walls of the town. These walls become the crucial delimiting line between the sacred and profane spaces."<sup>97</sup> For the Kwakwaka'wakw theater the initial boundaries were those which defined the various districts of the community environment: the beach and the forest edge.

In terms of the Winter Ceremonial the forest was a preparation space entered by performers and those with special responsibilities relative to the theaters. Boys might be sent into the woods to collect hemlock or cedar from which to make costumes and paraphernalia.<sup>98</sup> It is also in this space that the singers went to learn and practice new songs. A specific clearing was always used for these activities. Like the backstage areas of the theater, this was restricted space. "After all have learned the new songs, they scatter and go home singly in order not to attract the attention of the other people."<sup>99</sup> As a separate space with a uniting characteristic, the clearing was a district. It also functions as a landmark in its role as singular element in the larger district which is the woods. Although

audience members could and did enter the forest, they were in danger of attack by the novice or of forced initiation by the dance societies that practiced there. Like the restricted areas in the theater structure, the woods became conceived space where the *Hamat'sa* hid and from which sounds emanated. Many distinctions are drawn between the village and the forest in Kwakwaka'wakw myth, particularly in regards to Man-Eater and Dzunuḱwa. Both these dangerous spirits make their homes in the woods, and there are many stories of culture heroes who encounter and defeat them, driving them away from the village. It was the forest edge where the conceptually restricted space of the woodlands contacted the public space of the village and activities took place which acknowledged the significance of this boundary.

Before the *Hamat'sa* performances could take place in the theater, the initiate had to be lured out of the woods. In one instance reported by Boas, the people gathered at the edge of the forest where those who belonged to a dancing society sang new songs and moved forward in rows holding each others' hands. The *Hamat'sa* suddenly appeared and was surrounded by the people. Actually it was an impersonator, who seemed to disappear right in the midst of the throng. This performer, "while being surrounded by the 'seals' takes off his hemlock dress and dresses in cedar bark like the other seals, so that apparently the *Hamat'sa* has disappeared again, leaving only his hemlock dress."<sup>100</sup> At the fourth capture attempt, the novice was lured to the theater and no longer returned to the woods. In some instances important performances marked the sea boundary in addition to the edge of the forest.

On November 23, 1894 Boas witnessed the capture of the Gusgimaxw novice. The Gusgimaxw had been invited as guests and audience for the Winter Ceremonial of the Fort Rupert Kwakwaka'wakw. Sometime that morning, after hearing the young man, the people went to the forest edge behind the village hoping to see the *Hamat'sa*. This landmark site was designated as the spot where the novice would come up from the underworld. However, he was not encountered until later, when a man was attacked by the initiate in the forest and fled into the sea to escape. Here at the water's edge the *Hamat'sa* was captured. The Gusgimaxw men sang two newly written songs while the women and the novice danced (figure 4). In this manner they moved along the beach, eventually entering the village. In other instances the Grizzly Bears and Fool

Dancers would become excited and chase the people out of the theater and into the surf.<sup>101</sup>

The boundaries defined by the water's edge and that of the forest were like membranes, analogous to those in the theater performance space. They limited the physical size of the performance area to the village district yet allowed for movement across by either audience members or actors. Yet the movement was not entirely free. The performers were not reported as entering the sea, while the audience was actively discouraged from going into the surrounding woodlands. The importance of these boundaries is signified by the theatrical activities that took place there. Yet most such performances were at the beginning of a given ceremonial sequence. For example, once the *Hamat'sa* entered the house, the activities centered on this landmark. The stage on which the performers played was initially limited to that same space in which the acts of everyday social discourse occurred. The edges defined the space just as the actions of the *Hamat'sa* in dance, song, and myth defined the world boundary. However, as the individual theatrical performances progressed the boundaries contracted. For the Kwakwaka'wakw the self-contained world of the living was the village which was eventually contained, figuratively and literally, within the house cum theater.

## CONCLUSION

With the change of seasons, the late nineteenth-century Kwakwaka'wakw village and individual residence was often transformed into a theater through the manipulation of space. In this process certain elements were given significance through performance actions, the visual arts of painting and sculpture, or the appropriation of extra-theatrical sign systems. The emphasized components were the paths, edges, districts, landmarks, and intersections of the theatrical expanse. These elements were utilized in both the initial physical definition of space and its later orchestration. Through the organization of theatrical territory, themes of extraordinary time and event, individual status, and familial rights were played out on the stage. For the Kwakwaka'wakw, then as today, the theater not only reflected these issues, but helped to shape them into social reality. This was accomplished by utilizing a highly interactive and dynamic theatrical space.

The Kwakwaka'wakw theater was not a fixed construction with highly differentiated performance, audience, and preparation spaces. Instead it was a field in flux where boundaries were established, disintegrated, and then reconfirmed. In parallel with the social hierarchy extant in the residence, audience and preparation spaces were arranged to reflect individual or group ranking. Overlaying both the house and theater was a sign system based on orientation and the human form. Within this structure, conceived and perceived spaces were established and then manipulated for varying dramatic effects. The performance field itself involved the interplay of iconic and deictic signs, a shifting from the real to the unreal which affected the audience space as well. Several facets of Kwakwaka'wakw performance tended to blur the distinction between the observer and the observed, conflating the two areas. At the same time, the audience was distanced from the performance, primarily through the accouterments of the dancers. Initially, the entire village district defined the theatrical space. As certain ceremonies progressed, the stage narrowed until it was confined within the physical theater structure.

According to Esslin, one of the main elements that converts the stage into an instrument of heightened meaning is the ability to concentrate reality in space and time.<sup>102</sup> The very process of this concentration was reflected in the spatial machinations of the Kwakwaka'wakw theater. The theater reported by Hunt and Boas not only concentrated and reflected the community, but influenced its very makeup. Here prestige was won and lost, reputations made, and retribution taken. The audience, in its role as critic and validator, influenced the dramatic outcome as much as the performers themselves. The layering of primary significations (such as crest rights) with meta-significations (such as the concept of transformation) created a powerful determinant within the culture. The intertwining of sign types and the semiotic flexibility of its structures, space, performances, and accouterments extend a power to the theater that derived from and carried over into non-theatrical time and place. The usurpation of the social and religious construct of the community, of the audience itself, provided both message and mechanism. The house was a marked container of concentrated reality. During the time of the Red Cedar Bark Season, the theater not only symbolized, but truly comprised, the world.

Famous everywhere, famous everywhere at both ends of the world. Tried to be imitated, tried to be imitated at both ends of the world. We shall see him (dancing) in the house him dancing.<sup>103</sup>

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### NOTES

1. The term *Kwakiutl* is primarily an anthropological and linguistic term used to designate various groups of people who live on or are tied to land at the north end of Vancouver Island and the opposite mainland shore. It does not reflect the name that these people called themselves in the past or today. The accepted term used by modern Kwakwaka'wakw speakers is *Kwakwaka'wakw*. Except when the term *Kwakiutl* is incorporated in a direct quote or title, *Kwakwaka'wakw* will be used here. In addition, the orthography developed by Jay Powell and Gloria Cranmer Webster, used at the U'mista Cultural Center, will be applied whenever possible. For a guide to pronunciation, see Wayne Suttles, "The Spelling of Kwabwala," *Chieftly Feasts: The Enduring Kwakiutl Potlatch*, ed. Aldona Jonaitis (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 15-17.

2. The discrepancies between the written and performed script as semiotic systems is discussed by Anne Ubersfeld, *Lire le Théâtre* (Paris: Ed. sociales, 1977), 35-36.

3. Examples of this include Marvin Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989) and *Theatre Semiotics: Signs of Life* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1990). In addition see James Redmond, ed., *Themes in Drama: Drama and Symbolism*, No. 4 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982) and *Themes in Drama: The Theatrical Space*, No. 9 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

4. Umberto Eco, *La Struttura Assente* (Milan: Bompiani, 1968).

5. Philip Drucker, *Indians of the Northwest Coast* (New York: McGraw-Hill

for the American Museum of Natural History, 1955), 148. Joyce Wike, "The Role of the Dead in Northwest Coast Culture," *Selected Papers of the 29th International Congress of Americanists*, Vol. 3, ed. Sol Tax (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 97.

6. Bill Holm, "Kwakiutl: Winter Ceremonies," *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast*, Vol. 7, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 379.

7. One major modification is that events that formerly lasted for at least eight days are now often compressed into a single evening. For more information on these changes, see *Chiefly Feasts*; Bill Holm's "Kwakiutl: Winter Ceremonies"; and his "Traditional and Contemporary Kwakiutl Winter Dance," *Arctic Anthropology*, 14 no. 7 (1975): 5-24.

8. Manfred Pfister, *The Theory and Analysis of Drama*, trans. John Halliday (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 34.

9. Fort Rupert retained its prominent position until the turn of the century when it was superseded by Alert Bay.

10. For a discussion of the evolution of ceremonial practices at this time, see Wayne Suttles, "The Traditional Kwakiutl Potlatch," *Chiefly Feasts*, 71-135.

11. Franz Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, ed. Helen Codere (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 311. These ceremonies were typically held during the winter, thus the name given by anthropologists. However, the Native term contains no reference to winter and Boas acknowledges that, although unusual, under the right circumstances the performances could be staged at any time. Franz Boas, *Ethnology of the Kwakiutl* (Washington, DC: Bureau of American Ethnology, Thirty-Fifth Annual Report, Parts 1 and 2, 1921), 1073. Gloria Cranmer Webster reports that in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s the preferred time for potlatches and their associated events was June, to correspond with already scheduled school and community sports activities. "Kwakiutl Since 1980," *Handbook of North American Indians*, 389.

12. My use of the word *transformation* here and in the rest of this paper is in the general sense of change in composition, structure, outward form, character, role, or condition. This is not to be confused with the specific usage in which the performer is perceived literally to become that which is portrayed. In the literature the term *transformation mask* is used to describe those masks which open up or allow for structural variation, consequently changing the identity of the character depicted.

13. Pfister, *Theory and Analysis*, 11.

14. Franz Boas, "The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Proceedings of the United States National Museum*, Report for 1895 (1897): 318 (hereafter cited as "Social Organization"). Also in reprint (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970). Although Boas does not address the issue, it must be remembered that trade was also of tremendous importance. The ease of transacting business was part of what drew the Kwakwaka'wakw people to Fort Rupert in the first place.

15. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 10.

16. Boas, "Social Organization," 418.
17. Holm, "Kwakiutl: Winter Ceremonies," 384.
18. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 178.
19. Boas, "Social Organization," 467.
20. In "Traditional and Contemporary Kwakiutl Winter Dance," 19, Holm reported that dancers in the *tha'sala* incorporated movements characteristic of the *f'seka*. At the time the older people were much disturbed. However, he predicted that such a blending or borrowing would become more common.
21. Throughout his book *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1960), Kevin Lynch applies five components that are used by residents to conceptualize their urban space: (1) learned routes or paths; (2) edges, which are boundaries and thus barriers to paths; (3) districts, defined by some common characteristic; (4) nodes where paths or districts come together and one must make a choice; and (5) landmarks. Although there is no evidence that this categorization reflects the Kwakwaka'wakw conceptualization of their environment, it does provide a useful tool for a discussion of function rather than meaning. Stanley Walens also notes the existence of similar physical boundaries for the Kwakwaka'wakw village in *Feasting With Cannibals* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), 53.
22. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 172; Boas, "Social Organization," 418, 502.
23. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 105-119.
24. *Ibid.*, 119. Shaming one's rival by demonstrating largess in a potlatch was quite common. However, participants were not required to stage an even larger affair in response.
25. Boas, "Social Organization," 545.
26. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 37, 303. Boas anglicized this term as "numaym."
27. Both women and men could be chiefs. However, the position was usually held by a male. For ease of reading I will restrict myself to the male gender in discussion.
28. Franz Boas, *Kwakiutl Culture as Reflected in Mythology* (American Folklore Society, Memoir 28, 1935), 43.
29. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 48.
30. Suttles, "The Traditional Kwakiutl Potlatch," 90.
31. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 301.
32. Boas, "Social Organization," 379-80.
33. Boas, "The Houses of the Kwakiutl Indians," *Proceedings of the United States National Museum*, no. 11 (1888), 202 (hereafter cited as "Houses").
34. Boas, "Social Organization," 375.
35. *Ibid.*, 336.
36. *Ibid.*, Fig. 17 and 375.
37. In the story of Siwidi an elder's foot is bitten by such a door. Judith Ostrowitz, personal communication, June 18, 1993.
38. See Walens, *Feasting With Cannibals*, 50-52, for a discussion of mats versus boxes to create public and private spaces.

39. Marius Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, Bulletin 119, National Museum of Canada Anthropological Series (Ottawa: Cloutier, 1950).

40. Holm, "Kwakiutl: Winter Ceremonies," 618; Webster, "Kwakiutl Since 1890," 389.

41. The term that Boas translated as "crest" refers to a number of rights transmitted through marriage. See Suttles, "The Traditional Kwakiutl Potlatch," 94. The word is limited here to visual images that were inherited.

42. Boas, "Social Organization," 327.

43. *Ibid.*, 504.

44. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 170.

45. Boas, "Social Organization," 503.

46. For a discussion of this translation, see Susanne Hilton and John Rath, "Objections to Franz Boas's Referring to Eating People in the Translation of the Kwakwaka'wakw Terms *Baxubakwalanuxusiwe* and *Hamats!a*," *Working Papers for the 17th International Conference on Salish and Neighboring Languages*, Portland State University (August, 1982): 98-106. Although objections have been voiced over the implications of cannibalism in this and other renderings, I retain it as one utilized by scholars as well as native Kwakwaka'wakw. For example, see Cranmer Webster in *Chiefly Feasts*.

47. Boas, "Social Organization," 431. Although Boas tends to use the masculine pronoun to refer to the *Hamatsa*, the novice could also be female. This is also true today. In addition, Boas' use of the word "exorcised" implies a belief by the participants of an actual possessive state. However, this is not at all certain.

48. Boas, "Social Organization," 528.

49. *Ibid.*, 444.

50. *Ibid.*, 448 and 530.

51. Boas, *Ethnology of the Kwakiutl*, 632, 678, 682.

52. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 365. Even in Western culture, the unique nature of twins is often commented on.

53. Boas, *Ethnology of the Kwakiutl*, 727.

54. I would argue that in one sense or another, all theater is concerned with transformation: social, emotional, spacio-temporal, intellectual. For a theoretical discussion of transformation of audience and performer within the theater, see Richard Schechner, "Performers and Spectators Transported and Transformed," *Kenyon Review*, 3 no. 4 (1981): 83-113. Bogatyrev has argued that the process of "semiotic transformation" (in which objects from everyday life are converted into signs in the aesthetic context of the stage) is the defining feature of theater. Petr Bogatyrev, "Forms and Functions of Folk Theater," *Semiotics of Art*, eds. Ladislav Matejka and Irwin Titunik (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1976), 51-56.

55. The Bella Bella (now called Heiltsuk) are near neighbors to the Kwakwaka'wakw and speak a related language.

56. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 172

57. Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theater Architecture*, 15.

58. Boas, "The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island," *The Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, vol. 8 part 2 (New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1909), 412.

59. Helen Codere, "Kwakiutl: Traditional Culture," *Handbook of North American Indians*, 365.

60. Edward Curtis, *The North American Indian: Being a Series of Volumes Picturing and Describing the Indians of the United States, The Dominion of Canada, and Alaska*, 20 vols., ed. Frederick W. Hodge (Norwood, MA: Plimpton Press, 1907-1930), v. 10: 7-8. Curtis was told by his informants that the carving of interior house posts was not common until after 1865.

61. Boas, "Houses," 199-202.

62. Boas, "The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island," 415. For a discussion of the anthropomorphic designation of areas within the house and body models among the Kwakwaka'wakw, see Irving Goldman, *The Mouth of Heaven* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975). For criticisms of Goldman's work, see reviews by Philip Drucker in *American Ethnologist*, 6 (1979), no. 1: 158-64 and Bill Holm in *Ethnohistory*, 23 (1979), no. 1: 72-74.

63. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 172-173.

64. Boas, "The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island," 416. Boas and Hunt provide specific details vis-à-vis gender, age, status, and the positioning of named seats.

65. Boas correspondence cited in *Chiefly Feasts*, 198. For more information on a similar dish held in the Milwaukee Public Museum, see M. Mochon, *Masks of the Northwest Coast* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public, 1966).

66. Boas, "Social Organization," 436.

67. *Ibid.*, 436.

68. Recently, several older Kwakwaka'wakw have commented on the loss of these characteristics with the utilization of modern track lighting at some performances. Judith Ostrowitz, personal communication, June 18, 1993.

69. Boas, "Social Organization," 369-371, 436.

70. *Ibid.*, 432-437, 487-494.

71. Pierce quoted in Carlson, *Theater Semiotics: Signs of Life*, 75. Pierce formulated three types of basic signs: symbol, icon, index. An icon is similar to the referential "object" through topological, spatial, or organizational similarity. An index is physically or causally connected. A symbol is a sign that arose arbitrarily. For a straightforward discussion, see Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

72. The general phenomena has been discussed as part of the "communicative dynamics" of theatrical sign systems by Jindřich Honzl, "Dynamics of the Sign in Theater," *Semiotics of Art*, 74-93.

73. Such power is evident even in circumstances removed from the preferred theatrical situation. At the opening of the exhibit *Chiefly Feasts*, I watched as third- and fourth-grade New York schoolchildren sat quietly, enchanted by the masked dancers who performed.

74. Boas, "Social Organization," 433.

75. Ibid., 469.
76. Boas, "Social Organization," 479; Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 182.
77. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 174.
78. Boas, "Social Organization," 460.
79. Walens discusses the house as a container analogous to a carved storage box in *Feasting With Cannibals*, 51-55.
80. Ibid., 461, 512.
81. Holm, "Traditional and Contemporary Kwakiutl Winter Dance," 19.
82. Boas, "Social Organization," 485-487.
83. Edward Bullough, "'Psychical Distance' as a Factor in Art and Aesthetic Principle," *British Journal of Psychology*, 5 (June 1912): 97.
84. Boas, "Social Organization," 433-435, 531.
85. Although it may seem to uninformed observers that these actions are spontaneous, actually they are an intricately planned part of the performance.
86. Ibid., 446-447.
87. Boas, "The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island," 416.
88. Hanna Scolnicov, "Theater Space, Theatrical Space, and the Theatrical Space Without," *Themes in Drama: The Theatrical Space* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press), 11-26.
89. Boas, "Social Organization," 483, 487.
90. Walens in *Feasting with Cannibals* and Goldman in *The Mouth of Heaven* both discuss eating and regurgitation as important metaphors in Kwakwaka'wakw culture.
91. Arnold van Gennep, *Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika Vizedom and Gabrielle Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 20.
92. Boas, "Social Organization," 522, 524.
93. Boas, "Houses," 204.
94. Boas, "Social Organization," 528.
95. Ibid., 549.
96. Boas, *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, 202.
97. Scolnicov, *Theater Space, Theatrical Space, and the Theatrical Space Without*, 23.
98. Boas, "Social Organization," 527.
99. Ibid., 520-21.
100. Ibid., 527.
101. Ibid., 516, 567-68.
102. Martin Esslin, "The Stage: Reality, Symbol, Metaphor," *Themes in Drama: Drama and Symbolism*, 1-12.
103. Boas, "Social Organization," 700.