

= Fountain of Time =

Fountain of Time , or simply Time , is a sculpture by Lorado Taft , measuring 126 feet 10 inches ( 38 @. @ 66 m ) in length , situated at the western edge of the Midway Plaisance within Washington Park in Chicago , Illinois , in the United States . This location is in the Washington Park community area on Chicago 's South Side . Inspired by Henry Austin Dobson 's poem , " Paradox of Time " , and with its 100 figures passing before Father Time , the work was created as a monument to the first 100 years of peace between the United States and Great Britain , resulting from the Treaty of Ghent in 1814 . Although the fountain 's water began running in 1920 , the sculpture was not dedicated to the city until 1922 . The sculpture is a contributing structure to the Washington Park United States Registered Historic District , which is a National Register of Historic Places listing .

Part of a larger beautification plan for the Midway Plaisance , Time was constructed from a new type of molded , steel @-@ reinforced concrete that was claimed to be more durable and cheaper than alternatives . It was said to be the first of any kind of finished work of art made of concrete . Before the completion of Millennium Park in 2004 , it was considered the most important installation in the Chicago Park District . Time is one of several Chicago works of art funded by Benjamin Ferguson 's trust fund .

Time has undergone several restorations because of deterioration and decline caused by natural and urban elements . During the late 1990s and the first few years of the 21st century it underwent repairs that corrected many of the problems caused by these earlier restorations . Although extensive renovation of the sculpture was completed as recently as 2005 , the supporters of Time continue to seek resources for additional lighting , and the National Trust for Historic Preservation has nominated it for further funding .

= = Planning = =

Time , along with many other public works in Chicago , was funded by Benjamin Ferguson 's 1905 gift of \$ 1 million ( \$ 26 @. @ 3 million today ) , to a charitable trust formed to " memorialize events in American History " . Lorado Taft initially conceived a sculpture carved from granite ; an alternative plan was to have it chiseled out of Georgia marble , which it is estimated would have cost \$ 30 @, @ 000 ( \$ 718 @, @ 283 ) a year for five years . The planned work was intended as part of a Midway beautification which was to include a stream , lagoons , and a series of bridges : a Bridge of Arts at Woodlawn Avenue , a Bridge of Religion at the intersection of Ellis Avenue , and a Bridge of Science at Dorchester Avenue ( formerly Madison Avenue ) . As part of the plan , the two ends of the Midway were to be connected by a canal in the deep depressions linking lagoons in Jackson and Washington Parks .

In 1907 , Taft had won the first commission from the Ferguson Fund to create the Fountain of the Great Lakes at the Art Institute of Chicago . Immediately afterwards , inspired by Daniel Burnham 's " Make no little plans " quote , he begin lobbying for a grand Midway beautification plan . In 1912 , Art Institute Trustee Frank G. Logan formally presented Taft 's plans to the fund 's administrators at the Art Institute of Chicago . Taft 's proposed Midway Plaisance beautification plan included two possible commemoration themes . His first choice was to honor the memory of the World 's Columbian Exposition that had been held in Jackson Park in 1893 . His alternative was to commemorate the centennial of the 1814 Treaty of Ghent " marking a century of perfect understanding between England and America " . Since other plans to commemorate the Exposition were under way , the second theme choice was adopted as the justification for a second Taft commission from the Ferguson Fund . Contemporary newspaper accounts anticipated that Taft 's entire Midway beautification plan would be approved easily .

Taft 's initial commission from the trust was limited to the creation of a full @-@ sized plaster model of Fountain of Time , under a five @-@ year \$ 10 @, @ 000 ( \$ 239 @, @ 428 ) annual installment contract signed on February 6 , 1913 . This would enable the model to be evaluated in 1918 . Taft first created a 20 @-@ foot ( 6 @. @ 1 m ) quarter @-@ scale model which received the Trustees ' approval in May 1915 . He eventually produced his full @-@ scale plaster model , 100 feet ( 30

@. @ 5 m ) in width peaking in the center , with an equestrian warrior and a robed model of Father Time with a height of 20 feet ( 6 @. @ 1 m ) . The installation of this model near its intended location was delayed by Taft 's World War I service with the Y.M.C.A. in France as part of a corps of entertainers and lecturers , but was completed in 1920 . However , Taft 's wider vision of a Chicago school of sculpture , analogous to other philosophical Chicago schools such as the contemporaneous Chicago school of architecture style , had lost momentum after the 1913 dedication of his Fountain of the Great Lakes . The Beaux Arts style had become dated ; instead of funding Taft 's large @-@ scale Midway Plaisance beautification plan , and providing the originally planned granite , bronze or Georgia marble materials , the trust only allocated sufficient funds and support for a concrete sculpture .

= = Location and installation = =

Time is in the Chicago Park District , in the Washington Park community area on Chicago 's South Side , near the Midway Plaisance . This location , adjoining the University of Chicago campus directly to the East , makes the sculpture a contributing structure to the Washington Park federal Registered Historic District , listed on the National Register of Historic Places . Time is considered to be the most important piece of monumental art in the Park District , which hosts over 100 art works . Its importance stems from its sculptor , its message , the era in which it was created , and the design of its reflecting pool by Howard Van Doren Shaw . Robert Jones , director of design and construction for the Art Institute of Chicago at the time , stated in 1999 that Time was the first finished art piece to be made of any type of concrete .

The sculpture is located a few blocks from Taft 's studio , the Lorado Taft Midway Studios , now a Chicago Landmark and National Historic Landmark , located at 60th Street and Ingleside Avenue . Other notable sculptures nearby include Henry Moore 's National Historic Landmark Nuclear Energy , which is on the site of the first self @-@ sustaining nuclear reaction at the University of Chicago . Jackson Park , connected to Washington Park and Time by the Midway Plaisance , hosts the Chicago Landmark Statue of the Republic ; at one time the Midway Plaisance , Jackson Park and Washington Park were jointly known as " South Park " .

There is little agreement on the dimensions of Time , with various sources describing it as between 102 to 127 feet ( 31 @. @ 1 to 38 @. @ 7 m ) long . One of the few precise estimates describes it as 126 feet 10 inches ( 38 @. @ 7 m ) long , 23 feet 6 inches ( 7 @. @ 2 m ) wide and 24 feet ( 7 @. @ 3 m ) tall . The sources are often unclear about whether they are describing the width of the reflecting pool from exterior wall to exterior wall , the width of the water within the reflecting pool 's interior walls , the width of the base of the sculpted mass of humanity , the width of the sculpted masses themselves , or the width of the parcel of land upon which Time is built .

Water began running in the completed sculpture on September 1 , 1920 , although it was not dedicated to the city until November 15 , 1922 . University of Chicago President Harry Pratt Judson delivered an address at the dedication ceremony at the Midway Plaisance , before contributions from Taft . President of the B.F. Ferguson Trust Charles Hutchinson , and John Barton Payne , President of the South Park Board .

= = Design and realization = =

The sculpture is made of a form of hollow @-@ cast concrete , reinforced with steel . It was cast in a 4 @, @ 500 @-@ piece mold , using 250 short tons ( 230 t ) of a material described as " concrete @-@ like " , which incorporated pebbles from the Potomac River . This composite material was an innovation at the time . For years , John Joseph Earley of Washington , DC , had used pebbles that seemed durable in the face of elements such as the weather and urban soot and grime . He had determined that by adding crushed pebbles he could create a new concrete mixture more durable than limestone but cheaper than marble or bronze . The reflection from the silica of the crushed stones complemented the durability with artistic beauty ; the same material was used at Chicago 's Fine Arts Building .

The sculpture depicts a hooded Father Time carrying a scythe , and watching over a parade of 100 figures arranged in an ellipse , with an overall pyramidal geometry . The allegorical procession depicts the entire spectrum of humanity at various stages of life . The contemporary 1920s Chicago Daily Tribune described the figures as " heroic " , and that choice of adjective has stayed with the piece . The figures are said to be passing in review as they rush through the stages of life , and include soldiers , frolicking children and kissing couples . Father Time is described in various newspaper articles as " huge " , " weird " , and " dominant " . Other Tribune critics described Time as a " pet atrocity " of Taft in large part due to its ugliness . One critic described the white figures as reminiscent of false teeth smiling across the end of the Midway .

Time commemorates the first 100 years of peace between the United States and Great Britain after the Treaty of Ghent concluded the War of 1812 on December 24 , 1814 . The design was inspired by the poem " Paradox of Time " by Henry Austin Dobson : " Time goes , you say ? Ah no , Alas , time stays , we go " . Time 's theme has been compared to Shakespeare 's All the world 's a stage monologue in As You Like It , which describes the seven ages of man : infant , schoolboy , lover , soldier , justice , old age , and dementia . Taft 's figures represent birth , the struggle for existence , love , family life , religion , poetry , and war .

Although most of the figures are generic representations of human forms in various walks and stages of life , Taft included himself , with one of his assistants following him , along the west side of the sculpture . He is portrayed wearing a smock , with his head bowed and hands clasped behind his back . His daughters served as models for some of the figures .

Taft is now better remembered for his books , such as The History of American Sculpture ( 1903 ) , regarded as the first comprehensive work on the subject . However , in his day he was well known for portraits and allegorical public sculpture , of which Fountain of Time is a prime example . It was produced in the period following his assignment to design sculptures for William Le Baron Jenney 's 1893 Horticultural Building for the World 's Columbian Exposition . During this period he designed several large @-@ scale public works , including Fountain of the Great Lakes . Taft resided in Illinois for most of his life and worked in the Midway Studios starting in 1906 .

= = Restoration = =

Designed without expansion joints , Time is one of a small number of outdoor sculptures made of reinforced pebble / concrete aggregate , few of which have been created since the 1930s . In 1936 , Time 's weather @-@ related cracks were repaired ; further work occurred in 1955 . The sculpture 's subsequent repairs were followed by a rededication celebration in 1966 . Although the sculpture received regular maintenance , early repair crews often did more harm than good , by using techniques such as sandblasting and patching cracks with rigid materials .

By the 1980s the sculpture was crumbling ; cracks had developed , details of the figures had worn away , and moisture had eroded the internal structure . In wintertime the fountain had to be protected by a tarp . Weather , air pollution , and vandalism meant that hundreds of thousands of dollars were now needed for restoration . The Chicago Park District , University of Chicago , and Art Institute of Chicago conservators all sponsored restoration work , including drying out the cavity of the hollow sculpture , removal of the deteriorated substructure , a newly designed ventilation system within the piece , a protective exterior coating , and repairs to the reflecting pool . In 1989 Chicago Park District allocated \$ 150 @,@ 000 to the repair project , which amount was matched by the Ferguson fund . By the end of 1991 , the Park District had collected \$ 320 @,@ 000 of the \$ 520 @,@ 000 estimated repair costs from public and private funds , although in 1994 the sculpture still awaited repair .

By early 1997 , after almost two decades of activity , the only repairs completed were phase one of the air ventilation system to dehumidify the hollow base , the drainage pipes and a new inner roof . Plans now included the erection of a temporary two @-@ story metal building to protect all but the giant Father Time from the harsh winters and to facilitate year @-@ round repair ; the reinforcement of corroded steel interior portions ; the replacement of inconsistent patches ; the substitution of engineered spacing for natural cracks , and finally , hand @-@ brushed concrete recoating . The

temporary building was budgeted at \$ 270 @, @ 000 ; the city spent a total of \$ 450 @, @ 000 on repairs approved by the Park District that year .

On April 19 , 1999 , the \$ 1 @. @ 6 million , two @- @ year phase two restoration began , scheduled for completion by May 2001 . Five workers began repairing the cracks , killing biological growth , removing calcium deposits and pollution @- @ blackened gypsum , and coating the 10 @, @ 000 @- @ square @- @ foot ( 930 m2 ) surface with a combination of lime putty , adobe cement and sand . The inoperable reflecting pool was not repaired in this phase . Although this phase was completed in 2001 , its effects were not visible until the following year , when the temporary protective structure was unveiled . The repairs were expected to sustain the sculpture for about 30 ? 50 years before any further repairs would be necessary .

In 2003 , the National Endowment for the Arts committed \$ 250 @, @ 000 to the Park District for the conservation and restoration of the reflecting pool . In 2004 , the University of Chicago contributed \$ 100 @, @ 000 and the Park District Board \$ 845 @, @ 000 to repair the pool and its water circulation system . This work was carried out in the summer of 2005 at a slightly reduced budget , and the fountain was filled with water for the first time in over fifty years . In 2007 , efforts began to add lighting . That same year the sculpture was nominated by Partners in Preservation , a fund for the preservation of historic sites , backed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and American Express . In a widely publicized contest that included open house events where the public could tour and learn about the competing historic sites , \$ 1 million was available for preservation efforts in the Chicago metropolitan area , but the fountain was not one of the 15 winning candidates .

= = Gallery = =

' ' Fountain of Time , ' ' before restoration

' ' Fountain of Time , ' ' after restoration ( August 2007 )

= = Fountain of Creation = =

Time was intended to be matched by a sister fountain , Fountain of Creation , on the opposite end of the Midway . Work was begun but was never completed . The finished portions of Fountain of Creation , depicting figures from the Greek legend of the repopulation of earth after the great flood , are considered Taft 's final work , and were given to University of Illinois at Urbana @- @ Champaign , his alma mater . The four surviving elements are figures ranging in height from 5 to 7 feet ( 1 @. @ 5 to 2 @. @ 1 m ) , and are collectively named Sons and Daughters of Ducalion and Pyrrha . Two of these elements stand outside the entrance to the university 's Main Library , and two others are located at the south side of Foellinger Auditorium .