

## **The Fullness**

**Grant R. Jones**

Grant Jones is a co-founder of Jones & Jones Architects and Landscape Architects in Seattle. He received his B. Arch. From the University of Washington, did post-graduate study as one of the poets in Theodore Roethke's verse-writing class during the last two years of Roethke's tenure as Poet in Residence at the University of Washington, received his MLA from Harvard's School of Design, and won the Frederick Sheldon Travelling Fellowship to research environmental determinism in South America and Western Europe. He has practiced ecological design for thirty years, pioneering in river planning, scenic highway design, zoo design, and landscape aesthetics. He has held academic positions at Harvard, the University of Virginia, Texas A&M, and the University of Washington and lectured at twenty Departments of Landscape Architecture. Some projects Grant has worked on recently are the Paris Pike Historic Highway in Kentucky, the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson, Disney's Animal Kingdom in Orlando, the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway across the Cascade Mountains in Washington, and the Commons Park in Denver (with Civitas, Inc.).

### *Finding A Voice*

Drawing a landscape opens your eyes and relaxes your brain. Writing about a landscape connects your heart to your pupils. Your respect and empathy for the land catapults. In an article I wrote called "Design as Ecogram" in the *Development Series* (Vol. 1, No. 1, University of Washington College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Spring 1975), I wrote: "I had learned that regardless of taste, preference, habit, changing cultural milieu, or more importantly, regardless of individual perception or operational intelligence, the landscape has an intrinsic aesthetic quality modulated by the energy of its expression. Thus, beauty really is 'in the eye of the beholder,' but as a function of the observer's receptivity, conditioned by the limitations of individual perceptual apparatus. We are reminded that poor readers are poor translators."

At the time, I don't think I appreciated how every poem I wrote about the landscape cumulatively increased my ability to translate what I was seeing. There are different scales to seeing, but seeing can be inadvertently handicapped by many forms of technical analysis and scientific reduction so that the very essence of a living thing, whether a drop of water or a tiny insect or a whole sweep of land, can be lost. By increasing your natural receptivity as an observer, a profound relationship opens up between you and a landscape.

So when I write about a landscape my heart is listening to it. Maybe it's in my Welsh Celtic blood, but when I write a poem about landscape I tap into a voice inside me that speaks for the connections my heart has made with the place. Poetry can be a profound tool of scholarly research.

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