



## **MURRAY DEWART**

### **AWARD WINNING, INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SCULPTOR AND POET**

Murray Dewart is an internationally recognized sculptor who has built large public and private sculptures in China, Israel, Peru, and across the United States in his forty-five year career. Sculpture Magazine called him "*one of Boston's premier sculptors.*"

He has work in more than forty-five permanent collections, among them the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, The DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, The Boston Athenaeum, The Cheng Yunxian Collection in China, Harvard University, the Rose Art Museum, the Haifa Museum of Art, and the San Marco Museum in Peru. Both Beijing and Fuzhou commissioned him to build large bronze and granite sculptures for their international sculpture parks, including one gate-piece that weighs thirty tons. In 1990, the city of Boston commissioned a 30-foot high sculpture for a temporary installation on the Boston Common. Harvard University purchased his bronze SunGate in 2006, and the Town of Brookline, MA, commissioned a nine-ton granite gate to mark the town's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Landscape Architecture Magazine critic, Marty Carlock, described his park project for the city of Cambridge, MA, as a "*landscape gem hosting three world class sculptures.*" His park sculpture near Tel Aviv was dedicated in September, 2013.

Murray has won awards, lectured widely, and been featured on radio and television. He has been a frequent guest speaker at Harvard University, and has been a visiting artist at M.I.T., and at Mishkenot Sha'ananim in Jerusalem. He has served on the Fine Arts faculty of Saint Anselm College, teaching Sculpture and Ritual.

Murray is the editor of a Random House anthology *Poems about Sculpture*, with a preface by poet laureate Robert Pinsky, and the auto-biography, *Hammer and Tongs: Journal Of an Artist and Sculptor*. A co-founder of Boston Sculptors Gallery, he is a graduate of Harvard College and Massachusetts College of Art. Murray and his wife, Mary, raised two sons outside of Boston, where his father and grandfather were clergymen.

## God Is In The Light

MURRAY DEWART

There is a mystery at the center of the world that is inescapably luminous. Testimonials about belief often cause me unease, as I am not always convinced that the words get at the truth. Actions and living the truth are more trustworthy. Lately I am drawn to the word *numinous*. It suggests the unknowable that is on the other side of all religions, the peace that passes understanding, or the shalom beyond the stars.

Doubt also has its place. Religions come and go, said Vincent Van Gogh, but God survives.<sup>1</sup> Some claim that God is a rumor, kept alive in human history. If so, look at what we've done with that so-called rumor. For millennia, the human imagination has worked restlessly, weaving stories, writing creeds, dreaming up songs, building temples, mosques, and cathedrals. Maybe we do so to console ourselves and fully inhabit the mystery of creation.

Religions, it must be said, have introduced grievous divisions and conflicts throughout human history. It is heartbreaking to witness sectarian dogma, thousands of years of warfare and misery, wound the beauty of the world, as humans inflict needless suffering on others. Religions have all too often violated their own tenets of charity and compassion. The poet, Seamus Heaney, born in the North of Ireland, where Catholics and Protestants had been at each other's throats for hundreds of years, lived through the truth of this. He wrote that "history teaches us not to hope," except in those rare moments when hope and history rhyme.<sup>2</sup> Do we need a stoic template as we await that rarity? We can't let the suffering of the world obscure its beauty. The dark forces rattle down history's iron track, and our time is short. It's best that we remember the light and practice being swift to love.

The long-ago Gnostic word for God was *shadow of a turning*. The poet Julia Randall made use of this in a prayerful poem: "Lord, that I am a moment of your turning."<sup>3</sup> What this evokes is something vast, mysterious, and full of majesty.

Sunrise comes each day, and we awaken, confronting the basic mystery of *whence* and *whither* and *why*. We say, "I am alive and here I am," glad for this chance to be. In gratitude, we sometimes use ancient words like the Psalms. The natural world – the valleys, the far hills, and the restless sea illuminated by the sun – with its comforting immensity, calls to us. "*God is in the light*," we sometimes say, or note that individuals of great soul can become the light.

I make my way through the world, sometimes wondering, "When will God be done with me?" Marianne Moore asks the question: "What are years?"<sup>4</sup> And the only answer that will suffice for me is: Call the years a blessing, as I open my heart to the brightening day.

**Footnotes:**

1. "Religions come and go, but God remains" is said to be a maxim of Vincent Hugo, whom van Gogh admired.
2. Seamus Heaney, *The Cure at Troy* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990).
3. Julia Randall, *Adam's Dream* (Alfred Knopf, 1969).
4. Marianne Moore, *Collected Poems* (Macmillan, 1952).