



*Gordon Smyth with four other former MoCC directors at The Last Souper Supper, March 2007
(l to r:) Jan DeVries, Ken Shores, Darcy Edgar, Gordon Smyth, David Cohen*

Museum of Contemporary Craft remembers Gordon Smyth

*The Gallery, or at least the way I remember it, became a way of life for me. I don't remember one day with a nine to five schedule. It seemed to me I was always there, painting the walls for the next exhibition or installing the exhibition and returning at night for the opening...
The Gallery gave me a great deal, including many life-long friendships.*

Gordon Smyth

3934 Corbett: Fifty Years at Contemporary Crafts

The Museum is deeply saddened to announce the passing of Gordon Smyth, energetic and influential director of Contemporary Crafts Gallery (CCG, now Museum of Contemporary Craft) from 1968 - 1973. The second paid director of the organization, Smyth is best remembered for coordinating bold new exhibitions showcasing young artists with fresh ideas, and drawing on his design background to inform the presentation of work. Among his legacies, he initiated new programs including the Halvorsen Residency, which ran for nearly forty years. Smyth was also a graduate of the interior architecture program at University of Oregon. He died Thursday, November 12 in San Francisco.

Museum of Contemporary Craft
in partnership with **Pacific Northwest College of Art**

Interior designer Gordon Smyth, a risk-taker with an interest in emerging artists, followed Ken Shores as director of the Contemporary Crafts Gallery in 1968. Smyth established two important new programs during his tenure. Although the organization had hosted an informal residency program since the late 1950s, it wasn't until the construction of a potter's studio on-site at 2923 SW Corbett Avenue in 1969 that a formal residency was established. In the early seventies, Smyth worked with CCG President Dick Norman to develop the artist-in-residence program, endowed by Ruth Halvorsen. For young artists beginning their careers, the Halvorsen Residency provided an opportunity to focus and create a significant body of work, culminating in an exhibition at CCG and the donation of a piece to the collection.

Smyth also helped institute the Craftsmen-in-the-Schools program in 1972, through which local craft artists provided hand-on outreach in Portland's public schools. The program outgrew CCG's ability to manage it in later years, and administration of the renamed Artists-in-the-Schools program was transferred to the Regional Arts and Culture Council in 1996. During Smyth's tenure, the CCG hosted a range of exhibitions and continued to serve as a social hub for area artists and collectors. Solo exhibitions of work by Jack Lenor Larsen and Ken Shores, as well as exhibitions featuring macramé, wearables, body art, black light, installations, experimental films and videos filled the exhibition schedule in the first half of the decade.

Namita Gupta Wiggers

Unpacking the Collection: Selections from the Museum of Contemporary Craft