

29 January 2008  
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Portland, Oregon

## Generations: Ken Shores

On view at Museum of Contemporary Craft April 10–July 23, 2008

This retrospective exhibition places Ken Shores' work within the context of his home, travels, and experiences. Juxtaposing wall-sized images of Shores' object-laden home with his own artwork, the exhibition provides connections between ancient objects and archetypal forms and Shores' personal vocabulary. Long-recognized for his global perspective, the exhibition seeks a new understanding of Shores' work in the context of his role as a student, teacher, leader, artist and foundational figure in the American Craft Movement. Long overdue, this is the largest exhibition of Shores' own work and personal collection. A publication with archival and object photographs and essays will be available for purchase from the Museum.

For over 50 years, artist Ken Shores has created work with clay. A graduate of the University of Oregon in 1957, Shores entered the art arena at a moment of great change in the history of art-making in US academic institutions. As returning GI's and WWII émigrés energized the academy, Shores and his contemporaries began to erase the divide between traditional studio pottery and the exploration of clay as an expressive and conceptual medium, paving the path for the widespread acceptance of clay in art practice today.

Shores' work links traditional craft with a range of global influences. From Antonio Gaudi to Japanese Haniwa figures, pre-Columbian textiles to East Indian temple architecture, Shores' inspirational sources stem from a deep connection to a broad and global cultural heritage. Shores gained widespread international acclaim in the late 1960s for a series of powerful, ritualistic clay objects coated in metallic glazes and studded with colorful feathers. Presented like museum artifacts in acrylic boxes with mirrored backs, the works were included in *Objects: USA*, now recognized as a landmark exhibition documenting the American Craft Movement. His work is found in such notable collections as the Seattle Art Museum, Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan, Johnson Wax Collection, the Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, the Portland Art Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Craft, among others.

Born in Lebanon, Oregon in 1928, Ken Shores served in the US Army from 1951-1952, returning to the University of Oregon where he earned his MFA in 1957. Shores participated in the landmark American Craft Council Conference at Asilomar, CA in 1957. From 1957-1964, Shores served as the Artist-in-Residence at the Oregon Ceramic Studio, Portland, OR (now known as Museum of Contemporary Craft), and served as the first paid director from 1965-68. A professor emeritus from Lewis and Clark College, Shores led the art department and taught ceramics from 1967 – 1995. In 1980 he was elected as a Lifetime Trustee Emeritus to the National Board of the American Crafts Council, and in 2007, was included in the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

For information on accompanying programming, please visit our website.

For more information about this exhibition and related Museum programming; to schedule an interview with an exhibiting artist, the exhibition curator or Museum staff; or for access to press images, please contact Sarah Brown, Communications Assistant (contact information listed at the top of this page).

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These images are available as high resolution JPEG files at our online press center: [www.MuseumofContemporaryCraft.org/info\\_press.php](http://www.MuseumofContemporaryCraft.org/info_press.php)

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1. Shores' living room; Photo by Aaron Johanson

2. View from Shores' hallway (dining room visible); Photo by Aaron Johanson

3. Ken Shores, *Tall Goblet*, c.1960; Ceramic; 13 x 9 inches diameter; Gift of Ruth Halvorsen; From the Collection of Museum of Contemporary Craft; Photo by Dan Kvitka

4. Ken Shores, *Little Red I*, 1962; Acrylic on clay; 24.75 x 13 x 9 inches; From the Collection of Museum of Contemporary Craft; Photo by Dan Kvitka

5. Shores' living room; Photo by Aaron Johanson

6. Ken Shores, *Feather Fetish*, 1970d; Ceramic, feathers, Plexiglas, mirror; 12.5 x 14.5 x 4 inches; Gift of Ken Shores; From the Collection of Museum of Contemporary Craft; Photo by Dan Kvitka

7. Shores' dining room; Photo by Aaron Johanson



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# Museum of Contemporary Craft