

# TAM IRVING

## BIOGRAPHY AND CURRICULUM VITAE

Tam was born in 1933 in Bilbao, Spain. Part of his childhood was spent in Portugal where the traditional earthenwares first stimulated his interest in ceramics. This early interest was set aside for what he deemed more serious vocational matters while he studied at Edinburgh University, Scotland, receiving a B.Sc. degree from this institution in 1956. That same year he emigrated to Canada and worked for seven years in the Shell Canada organization as a chemist. Not finding any fulfillment in this work, he left industry in 1964 and returned to his first love, clay. He studied at the Winnipeg School of Art, Haystack Mountain School of Crafts and the Vancouver School of Art. Feeling that what he really needed to do was to make pots, he cut short any further academic study and established a studio in Vancouver in 1966, where he earned a living as a production potter for the next seven years. In 1973 he began to teach at the Vancouver School of Art and this matured into a full-time teaching career at the Emily Carr University of Art and Design. He retired from the Institute in 1996 in order to return to his own practice.

## EXHIBITIONS

- 2016** **Still Life and Painterly Influences, Macau Art Garden, Macau, China**  
**The Space in between, West Vancouver Museum**
- 2015.** **Mud, Hands, Fire, University of Manitoba, School of Art Gallery, Winnipeg**
- 2013 Beyond the Vessel's Edge: Ceramics from the Permanent Collection, Surrey Art Gallery.
- 2012 Connections: Canadian and British Studio Ceramics, Gardiner Museum, Ontario.
- 2011 The Modern Eye, Craft and Design in Canada 1940 – 1980, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.
- 2008 Then and Now, Crafts Association of British Columbia.
- 2007 Transitions of a Still Life, solo exhibition, Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby, British Columbia.
- 2005 Fired, Ferry Building Gallery, West Vancouver, British Columbia.
- 2004 Thrown: Influences and Intentions of West Coast Ceramics, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, University of British Columbia
- 2004 Generations: Part II, Art in West Vancouver to 1975, West Vancouver Museum.
- 2003 Celadon: Beyond the Glaze, Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia.
- 2002 10th Biennale Nationale de Ceramique, Galerie d'art du Parc, Trois-Rivieres, Quebec.
- 2001 Making Contact, McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, Ontario.
- 1998 A Question of Identity: Twelve Canadians, Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, Ontario.
- 1997 Chinese and Canadian Ceramics Exhibition, Jingdezhen, China.
- 1995 Clay in Canada - North by Northwest, invitational, sponsored by the Crafts Councils of the four Western Provinces.
- 1994 Containment: The Space Within, invitational, Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, Ontario
- 1992 A Treasury of Canadian Craft, The Canadian Craft Museum, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- 1990 Ceramics Invitational, Kansas State University, Manhattan, U.S.A.
- 1989 Teachers Do, invitational, Gallery of B.C. Ceramics, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- 1986 Collaboration, Cartwright Street Gallery, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- 1985 Collaborative Exhibition with Takako Suzuki, Amaury St. Gilles Gallery, Tokyo, Japan.
- 1984 Tour du Canada, Group Exhibition, Interaction, Montreal, Quebec.

- 1983 Ceramic Symposium and Exhibition, Utah State University, Utah, U.S.A.
- 1981 Ceramics '81 Invitational, Potters' Guild of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia.  
Environment Metamorphosed, Anna Leonowens Gallery, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.
- 1979 Ceramics from the West Coast, Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta.
- 1978 Artisan '78, National Touring Exhibition.  
Made by Hand, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia.
- 1977 House of Ceramics, Group Exhibition, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- 1976 House of Ceramics, Solo Exhibition, Vancouver, British Columbia.  
Clay, The Medium and The Method, University of California, Santa Barbara, California, U.S.A.
- 1975 Ceramics West '75, Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.  
31st. Annual Ceramics Exhibition, Lang Art Galleries, California, U.S.A.
- 1974 Contemporary Ceramic Sculpture, Fine Arts Gallery, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- 1973 Ceramics International.
- 1969 Canadian Ceramics '69.
- 1967 Canadian Ceramics '67  
24th. Ceramics National Exhibition, Everson Museum of Art, U.S.A.  
Western Canadian Art Circuit.
- 1966 New Design Gallery, Solo Exhibition, Vancouver, British Columbia.

## **COLLECTIONS**

Federal Government, Department of External Affairs, Ottawa.  
Massey Foundation.  
Jean A. Chalmers, National Craft Collection.  
The Indusmin Collection.  
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England.  
Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo, Ontario.  
The Canadian Museum of Civilization, Quebec.  
The Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Ontario.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- 2007 Transitions of a Still Life: Ceramic Work by Tam Irving. Book written by Carol E. Mayer senior curator (UBC) Museum of Anthropology.
- 1999 A Question of Identity, Contact Magazine, Spring 1999 No. 116
- 1998 A Question of Identity - Ceramics at the End of the Twentieth Century .The International Academy of Ceramics 98 General Assembly. Contribution to the catalogue.
- 1996 A Personal Statement, The Studio Potter, Vol. 24, No. 2  
The Language of Pottery, Contact Magazine, Summer 1996 No. 105
- 1993 Canadian craft Treasures, Ceramics Monthly, January. 1993.
- 1991 Choosing Clay, a collaborative exhibition between the Canadian Craft Museum and the Potters' Guild of British Columbia. Introductory essay to the catalogue.
- 1983 A Utah Symposium, Ceramics Monthly October 1983.
- 1982 The Craftsman's Way, Ceramics Monthly, October 1982.
- 1975 On Choosing Naturally Occurring Materials in Glazes, Studio Potter, Summer 1975.
- 1968 The Harry Davis Workshop II, published by the Potters' Guild of British Columbia.
- 1966 The Harry Davis Workshop, published by the Potters' Guild of British Columbia.