

# A Passion for Beauty

## collecting the work of



# Jim Smith

*Dish with Dog and Rabbit, 2006*  
Nova Scotia earthenware clay, white slip, colourants, glaze

### EXHIBITION STATEMENT

This exhibition displays selected pieces from the collection of Frances Gregor, a private collector of the work of Jim Smith, RCA. The exhibit represents a 25 year retrospective of the artist's work and includes some of the most significant pieces produced by the artist.

Smith draws cues from historical models that serve as a framework on which to build contemporary ideas regarding function and beauty. Travel research helps to inform his exploration of cross-cultural influences in the development of ceramics. His goal is to provide a well considered contemporary object encoded with historical references that can offer an intellectual, visual, and sensual experience.

The intent of this exhibition is to present the artist's work from the viewpoint of a committed collector, and to share insights into the process of building a collection of fine craft objects. Frances Gregor shares her vision in this Collector's Statement ...

*My first purchase was a two-piece butter dish. I was drawn to its beautiful yellow cover. It was 1993 and, though I didn't know it, I had taken the first step in building a collection of Smith's work that, 25 years later, numbers over 100 pieces.*

*In the following years, I made annual purchases, usually the small serving pieces that Smith made for sale to visitors to Chester. Occasionally I bought pieces of limited production: a pair of tall layered leaf candlesticks in 1999, and a pair of acorn and oak leaf demitasse in 2000.*

*In 2004, the late Dr. Marie Elwood, decorative arts historian, asked me why I collected Smith's work. "Because he creates objects of beauty" I said, "and, where I can, I want to surround myself with beauty." Elwood's question led me to a conscious decision; I would seek Smith's guidance and, as funds permitted, purchase what he judged his best work.*

*My collection illustrates Smith's evolution as a ceramic artist. I see the development of his technical skill and artistic ability as I scan the collection created across several decades.*

*Beauty, as I perceive it, governs my purchases across the entire craft domain. But I deliberately choose to support Nova Scotian artisans through the acquisition and use of their work. This is my 'craft credo'.*

*Smith continues to produce beautiful and well considered objects as he explores new dimensions of his craft, such as his recent embellishment of clay with metal. And I continue to live surrounded by the beauty I find in his work.*

- Frances Gregor



*Cordoba Platter, 2015*  
Nova Scotia earthenware clay, white slip, colourants, glaze



*Flower Bricks for Marie Antoinette, 2014*  
Nova Scotia earthenware clay, white slip, colourants, glaze



*3 Candles & A Flower, 2017*  
Nova Scotia earthenware clay, white slip, colourants, glaze

### BIOGRAPHY

Ceramic artist Jim Smith has been working out of his seaside studio in Chester, Nova Scotia for 36 years. A graduate of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University, he is a recipient of numerous awards and grants, including travel and research grants from the Canada Council for the Arts. He has traveled extensively delving into the ceramic history of China, Mexico, Europe, Morocco, Turkey and most recently culture rich Uzbekistan.



Jim Smith at work in his studio  
Photo credit: Marilyn Smulders, 2014

Jim was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts and is a recipient of the QE II Commemorative medal awarded by the Canadian Government in recognition of his distinguished career achievement and significant contribution to Canadian society. He was a guest speaker at the Cheongju International Biennale of Fine Craft in South Korea and a juror for the Saidye Bronfman Award, Canada's foremost distinction for excellence in fine craft.

He has taught workshops across North America and has had his work included in over 100 exhibitions, nationally and internationally. His work consistently appears in ceramic magazines and books with an international focus, and is included in many prestigious public and private collections including Toronto's Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, the Canadian Museum of History, the Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, and The Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute in China.

Most importantly, Jim's work has found its way into the lives of thousands of people the world over who cherish interacting with it on a daily basis.

[www.jimsmithstudio.ca](http://www.jimsmithstudio.ca)



*Titanic Dish, 2012*  
Nova Scotia earthenware clay, white slip, colourants, glaze