Museum of Contemporary Craft Examines the Life and Practice of Weaver Laurie Herrick

Exhibition | Laurie Herrick: Weaving Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
March 17 – July 30, 2011

December 10, 2010—Portland, OR— Museum of Contemporary Craft is pleased to present Laurie Herrick: Weaving Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, an exhibition that showcases the work of an important Portland-based designer-craftsman, weaver and educator. The exhibition offers a retrospective alongside new work inspired by Herrick’s weavings to be created through artist residencies. An interactive online feature on the Museum’s website includes weaving drafts and an open invitation for artists, craftspeople and designers to upload images of their own projects inspired by Herrick’s work.

A classic example of a mid-century designer-craftsman, Laurie Herrick (1908-1995) worked as a weaver in Martha Pollack’s LA-based design studio during the 1950s. Relocating to Portland in the late 1950s, Herrick brought her experience with new textiles, design principles and a focus on loom-controlled weaving. She taught weaving at the Oregon College of Art and Craft from 1958 to 1979, conducted weaving workshops and lectured nationwide, participated as a board member in regional and national handweaving guilds, and mentored weavers throughout the Portland community, including such community leaders as Jean Vollum, Betty Gray and Sue Cooley. Examples of her work can be found throughout the region, including the Tree of Life (1969) created for the First Unitarian Church following the catastrophic fire that destroyed the original weavings by Anna Belle and Florence Crocker. The noted Crocker sisters wove textiles for John Yeon’s renowned Watzek House and were founding figures of the Portland Art Museum and the Museum Art School, now known as Pacific Northwest College of Art.

Featuring examples of Herrick’s reversible summer and winter wall hangings, landscape-inspired works, Op Art explorations, open warp pieces and loom-controlled garments, the exhibition
also includes a Macomber loom, selections from her archives, tools and yarn samples to provide historical context. Inspiration boards incorporating Herrick's notes, clippings and process will be available in both the exhibition and on the Museum's website.

To demonstrate how Herrick's work is relevant today, two additional components will be integrated into the exhibition. Fashion-oriented photography styled by Adam Arnold and Galen Amussen show Herrick's garments worn in unusual ways, and a series of five artist residencies will take place throughout the exhibition, contributing new interpretations of her patterns through a variety of mediums. Each of these five artists-in-residence will create work inspired by Herrick's weavings, patterns and archives. Confirmed residents to-date include:

Deborah Valoma, Director of Fine Arts and Associate Professor of Textiles, California College of the Arts, where her specialized field of research is the cultural history of textiles as a global aesthetic practice.

Christy Matson, Assistant Professor, Fiber and Material Studies, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, who weaves cloth on both hand-operated and industrial Jacquard looms and is known for weavings that incorporate sound.

Mackenzie Frere, Instructor, Alberta College of Art + Design, creates work rooted in a contemplative approach to cloth-making focused on the beauty of natural materials. Frere employs dyeing, weaving and knitting as a kind of gestural thinking.

The two remaining artist residents will be announced in early 2011; one of whom will be selected from project proposals open to Portland-area artists, craftspeople and designers.

To provide ongoing access to Herrick’s work, weaving drafts and images of her signature themes will be provided in an open-source feature on the Museum’s website. The Museum invites anyone – locally to globally – to download weaving drafts online and create their own works inspired by Herrick’s, and to upload images of their projects to the Museum’s website. This community-oriented and interactive component offers ongoing access to Herrick as a resource and inspiration for future artists, craftspeople and designers.

“In the 1950s, such companies as DuPont introduced new textiles into the interior design market. By employing weavers, these companies were able to create strong, well-designed swathes of cloth. Herrick is an example of the type of designer-craftsman who could be found in nearly any city in the United States at one time,” explains Namita Gupta Wiggers, curator, MoCC. “By the 1960s and 1970s, industrial machines could effectively mimic time-consuming handweaving processes, and conceptual art had moved weaving off-loom. Today, weaving has resurfaced in design from Nike sneakers to Chilewich placemats. By introducing Herrick to audiences right now, the exhibition connects current interests with historic practices and techniques, offering opportunity for new experimentation.”

The exhibition will travel to Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, followed by the College of the Redwoods in Eureka, California. In turn, each institution will invite a local artist-in-residence to contribute a Herrick-inspired work to the exhibition. Providing opportunities for
local artists and communities to experience their work in the context of a Museum while expanding the audience for this process-driven, interactive exhibition, *Laurie Herrick: Weaving Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* reminds us that craft is a living, morphing practice.

**ABOUT MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY CRAFT**
Committed to the advancement of craft since 1937, Museum of Contemporary Craft in partnership with Pacific Northwest College of Art is one of Oregon’s oldest cultural institutions. Centrally located in Portland’s Pearl District, the Museum is nationally acclaimed for its curatorial program and is a vibrant center for investigation and dialogue, expanding the definition of craft and the way audiences experience it.

**ABOUT PACIFIC NORTHWEST COLLEGE OF ART**
Since its founding in 1909, Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA) has become a leader in innovative educational programs that connect students to a global perspective in the visual arts and design. In addition to its nine Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees, PNCA offers graduate education with an MFA in Visual Studies and an MFA in Collaborative Design, as well as an MFA in Applied Craft and Design developed in collaboration with Oregon College of Art and Craft.

PNCA is actively involved in Portland’s cultural life through exhibitions and a vibrant public program of lectures and internationally recognized visiting artists, designers and creative thinkers. With the support of PNCA+FIVE (Ford Institute for Visual Education), the College has a partnership with the nationally acclaimed Museum of Contemporary Craft. For more information, visit www.pnca.edu.
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Museum of Contemporary Craft

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www.MuseumofContemporaryCraft.org

Hours
Tuesday through Saturday 11 am to 6 pm
First Thursday of every month 11 am to 8 pm
Closed Sunday and Monday

in partnership with Pacific Northwest College of Art
Laurie Herrick

High resolution images available for download on the press center at:

Laurie Herrick, **Three Giraffes**, 1970, linen, cotton and wool, 72 x 32”.
Collection of MoCC in partnership with PNCA, Gift of Ken Shores; 2006.05.01.
Photo by Dan Kvitka.

Laurie Herrick, **Crater**, 1969, wool, 56 x 28”.
Collection of MoCC in partnership with PNCA; 1998.91.25.
Photo by Dan Kvitka.

Laurie Herrick, **CRATER (detail)**, 1969, wool, 56 x 28”.
Collection of MoCC in partnership with PNCA; 1998.91.25.
Photo by Dan Kvitka.

Laurie Herrick, **Green Op**, c.1970, wool, 48 x 84”.
Collection of Ann and Jon Sinclair. Photo by Dan Kvitka.

Laurie Herrick, **Purple Polychrome**, 1975, wool.
Collection of Carol Smith-Larson.
Photo by Dan Kvitka.

Laurie Herrick, **Tree of Life (1/4 scale)**, 1969, 28 x 24”.
Collection of Ann and Jon Sinclair. Photo by Dan Kvitka.

Laurie Herrick, **Laurie Coat, brown polychrome (Detail)**, c. 1980, wool, 39 1/4 x 58 1/2”.

Laurie Herrick’s **Shuttles**, 1960s-1980s,
Collection of Ann and Jon Sinclair, Photo by Dan Kvitka.

Laurie Herrick, **Pant Suit - brown/cream**, c. 1975, Top 27 1/2 x 42”, Bottom 40”.
Collection of Ann and Jon Sinclair, Photo by Jake Stangel.