

Helen Williams Drutt English (Helen Drutt)

As Executive Director and founding member of the Philadelphia Council of Professional Craftsmen (1967-1974), developer of the syllabus for the first college level course in the history of modern craft in 1973, Founder/Director of the Helen Drutt Gallery in Philadelphia (1973-2002); her archives have become over the past thirty-five years a resource to scholars and institutions throughout the world. The gallery was among the first in the United States to make a commitment to the Modern and Contemporary Craft Movement. In 1979 *American Craft Magazine* stated that her gallery was to crafts, what Alfred Stieglitz's Gallery 291 was to photography earlier in this century. In 1990, the name of the gallery was changed to Helen Drutt: Philadelphia in order to embrace all of the activities which included extensive research.

Championing to this day-the works of Rudolf Staffel, William Daley, Paula Winokur, Robert Winokur, Robert Baines, Margaret West, Gerd Rothmann, Merrily Tompkins, Manfred Bischoff, Nancy Carman, Anne Currier, Wayne Higby, Lizbeth Stewart, Robert Turner, Olaf Skoogfors, Gijs Bakker, Bruce Metcalf, Breon O'Casey, Bruno Martinazzi, Peter Chang, and Tone Vigeland among others, she also organized the exhibitions of *Robert Arneson's Self-Portraits* in 1979, Ruth Duckworth and Claire Zeisler in 1981, Claus Bury's Site-Sculpture in 1982, as well as bringing works of Ruth Duckworth, Richard DeVore, Breon O'Casey, Gijs Bakker, Peter Voulkos, Miyé Matsukata, David Watkins, Wendy Ramshaw, Lenore Tawney and Betty Woodman, to Philadelphia in the early 70's and 80's. Helen W. Drutt English acted as a catalyst to introduce American Crafts internationally and brought European and Australian works to Philadelphia and in New York (June 1988- Dec.1990). Among the seminal clay exhibitions she organized were *Ten Potters*, 1971, *Seattle: USA*, 1971, *Another Cup Show*, 1973, the first two exhibitions of contemporary tureens (1976, 1983) for the Campbell Museum as well as *Contemporary Ceramics: A Response to Wedgwood* in 1980 among others during the past 2 decades (too numerous to cite) and in 2002 "Poetics of Clay" which traveled internationally.

Contemporary Jewellery: 1964 - 1994, Helen Williams Drutt Collection has been exhibited in eleven museums which include the Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts, Canada (1984), Philadelphia Museum of Art (1986-87) and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. (1994-95) and the Museum voor Moderne Kunst, Oostende, Belgium (1995). The support of this exhibition expresses a primary concern and focus on preserving a segment of the history of contemporary jewellery. *Jewelry of Our Time*, authors, Peter Dormer and Helen W. Drutt English was published by Thames & Hudson, London and Rizzoli, USA in November, 1995. After a period of seven years, the expanded Helen Williams Drutt Collection was acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. In 2007 "Ornament as Art" Helen Williams Drutt collection opened at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston with an extensive catalog of the complete collection.. Recent publications and essays include *Brooching It Diplomatically: A Tribute to Madeleine K. Albright*, Robert Smit: *An Empty House*, Peter Skubic: *Between*, Ramona Solberg: *Findings*, Georg Dobler

and Linda MacNeil. *American Ceramics: 1950-1990*, was published by the Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan in the Spring of 2002. Peter Chang: *It's Only Plastic*, was published by Arnoldsche Art Publishers, Germany in 2002, Tone Vigeland: *Jewellery + Sculptures: Movements in Silver*, was published by Arnoldsche Art Publishers, Germany in 2003. Anne Currier: Sculpture appeared in 2006, essays for forthcoming publications include *Sculpture to Wear*, Marjorie Schick and Wayne Higby's *Earthcloud*. In 2006, she contributed an essay to *Women's Tales: Four Israeli Jewelers* (Racine Art Museum and Israel Museum of Art) and in 2007 Rut Bryk (Designmuseo, Finland). Additional essays recently published are Sun Koo Yuh: Along the Way, Korean Ceramics September 20 to December 30, 2007, and Stanley Lechtzin: Five Decades 1959-2009, May 14 to July 26, 2009; both documented exhibitions at the Philadelphia Art Alliance

She has lectured internationally and served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts. Honors include Fleisher Founder's Award from the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial, Philadelphia Museum of Art (1994), Mayor's Arts and Culture Award 1994, Honorary Fellow, American Craft Council 1992, Lifetime Achievement in the Crafts, National Museum of Women, Washington, D.C. 1993, Tyler Alumni Fellow, Tyler School of Art, 1991, Honorary Doctorate of Arts, Moore College of Art and Design, Philadelphia, 1990. In 2001, was the recipient of the annual Honorary Membership by the Society North American of Goldsmiths. In May 2001, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Arts, University of the Arts. Named Visionary! By Museum of Arts and Design, New York in 1999. She serves on the Advisory Committee, Indian and Himalyan Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and appointed as a member to the International Academy of Ceramics, Geneva, Switzerland. Advisory Committee, Peter Dormer Lecture, Royal College of Art, London; Advisory Committee, Montreal Museum of Art, Canada; Friends of the Museum Het Kruithuis, 's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands. In 2002, she was the recipient of Award of Merit, The Philadelphia Art Alliance. In October 2002, she was named A Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 2004, she was admitted to the Goldsmith's Hall of Fame. In 2006, she received the Philadelphia Craft Medal from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. In 2008, she received the Founder's DAY Award form The Mint Museum of Art and Design, Charlotte, North Carolina. The Clay Studio honored her contribution to the field of contemporary craft in 2009, she will receive the Award of Distinction from the American Craft Council in Minneapolis, Minnesota October, 2009. In 2009, She served as a juror for Hawaii Crafts, lectured in four Islands (including Honolulu Academy of Arts), also lectured in Prague and will lecture in Europe in 2010.

Helen W. Drutt English was appointed a Cultural Ambassador for the City of Philadelphia by the Office of Arts and Culture from 1995-1999. This role supported her in the endeavors to strengthen the visibility of contemporary crafts as it fuses with the history of ideas of late 20th century art.

Helen W. Drutt English organized an exhibition of international ceramics entitled

“Poetics of Clay: An International Perspective” at the Philadelphia Art Alliance (September 14 – November 11, 2001) which has traveled to the Museum of Art and Design in Helsinki, Finland (January 25 – March 24, 2002), and was exhibited in Houston, Texas at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft from February 14 – May 3, 2003. Initially over 180 works have been drawn from public and private collections, representing 121 artists. An extensive bibliography, a chronology of ceramic exhibitions and biographies of artists have been prepared for the forthcoming publication due in 2011.

She organized an exhibition entitled “A View from America: Contemporary Jewelry (1973-2003)” for the Gold Treasury Museum in Melbourne, Australia in February, 2004. She organized an exhibition for the DesignMuseo, Helsinki, Finland and The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii. “Three Voices: Three Continents- One World” (Paula Winokur: USA, Margaret West: Australia and Kristina Riska and Paula Winokur ”” Finland) opened in the DesignMuseo in Helsinki, in May 2005. Drutt organized and conceived the international exhibition “Challenging the Chatelaine” which opened in Helsinki in 2006 and is traveling to Belgium, Greece, Austria, The Netherlands and the United States. A catalogue has been published. “Symbiotic Realms” a survey of works by Kim Overstreet and Robin Kranitzky was published in 2008; the exhibition was held at the Designmuseum, Helsinki, Finland.

From July, 2003 – December 2006, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston appointed her to the position of Curatorial Consultant, Modern and Contemporary Decorative Arts and Design. This appointment was made in support of their acquisition of the Helen Williams Drutt Collection, and enabled her to continue research as well as collecting collateral material in support of the collection.

Arnoldsche will publish a major text documenting the history of the Helen Drutt Gallery with an extensive chronology and scholarly essays on the occasion of her 80th year (2010-2011) – It will also include all exhibitions that preceded the gallery as well as selected exhibitions which were organized for museums during that period.



Helen W. Drutt English founded the Maurice English Foundation for Poetry in 1984. An award is presented to an author in his or her sixth (or beyond) decade of life for a distinguished book of poem published during the preceding calendar year. This award is supported privately. In 2006 the award was replaced as she co-sponsored a poetry reading by Galway Kinnel at the Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, N.Y. The sponsorship will continue.

Maurice English Poetry Award

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| 2009 | Co-sponsoring Naomi Shihab-Nye with Storm King Art Center |
| 2008 | Ulla Hahn, German poet, first American reading |
| 2007 | Co-sponsored Galway Kinnel with the Storm King Art Center |
| 2006 | Award being analyzed due to limited responses |
| 2005 | Judge: F. D. Reeve Recipient: Caroline Knox |
| 2004 | Judge: Li-Young Lee Recipient: R.T. Smith |
| 2003 | Judge: Naomi Shihab Nye Recipient: Samuel Hazo |
| 2002 | Judge: Edward Hirsch Recipient: Robert Bly |
| 2001 | Judge: Susan Stewart Recipient: Kay Ryan |
| 2000 | Judge: Donald Hall Recipient: C. K. Williams |
| 1991 | Judge: Thomas Kinsella Recipient: Richard J. Fein |
| 1990 | Judge: Robert Hass Recipient: Jean Valentine |
| 1989 | Judge: Peter Viereck Recipient: W. S. Merwin |
| 1988 | Judge: Denise Levertov Recipient: David Ray |
| 1987 | Judge: Maxine Kumin Recipient: Philip Booth |
| 1986 | Judge: William Stafford Recipient: Linda Pastan |
| 1985 | Judge: Galway Kinnell First Recipient: Jane Cooper |

In 1999, The Maurice English Poetry Award sponsored a workshop and reading at The Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia. Guest Poet: Gregory Djanikian. In addition, a writing contest for citywide high school students for works about Philadelphia was sponsored by the Maurice English Poetry Award as part of the celebration of Philadelphia writers organized by The Penn Humanities Forum of the University of Pennsylvania.