

**MEDIA CONTACT**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Edith Heath: Tabletop Modernist***  
**May 31 – September 20, 2009**



**LEFT-RIGHT:** Edith Heath, Early handmade pitchers, early 1940s, Collection of Suzie Tompkins Buell;  
Edith Heath, Tile installation, c. 1960, Collection of Heath Ceramics

**Pasadena, CA** - The Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) is proud to present the exhibition *Edith Heath: Tabletop Modernist*. On view at the PMCA from May 31 to October 4, 2009, the exhibition focuses on the life of Edith Heath and her lasting influence on California design through her pottery. Popular at dinner tables across the country and featured in many of the early American industrial design exhibitions, Heath Ceramics helped define mid-century modernism.

Edith Heath began as a studio potter in San Francisco. She established Heath Ceramics in 1947 to meet the growing demand for her dinnerware and accessories. Although she focused on simple, minimalist style, her process was characterized by innovation and experimentation. Her use of unique glazes and clay underscored her belief that quality did not have to be sacrificed for mass production and accessibility. Her designs were also a reflection of the post-war attitude towards a more relaxed American lifestyle, especially in California, where indoor-outdoor living was taking root.

In the late 1950s Heath expanded production to include the manufacturing of tile, working closely with renowned architects that included Frank Lloyd Wright, Eero Saarinen, Alexander Girard and others. One of Heath's most popular installations is her collaboration with the architecture firm of Ladd and Kelsey for the award-winning tile exterior of what is now Pasadena's own Norton Simon Museum of Art, completed in 1969. The exhibition will also explore her influence on current designers and artists such as Christina Kim of Dosa and Adam Silverman, owner of Atwater Pottery and Studio Director for Heath Ceramics Los Angeles.

This exhibition will be the first ever retrospective of this California pioneer, and recent interest in modernist design and ceramic arts has made this upcoming exhibition even more timely. *Tabletop Modernist* is curated by Amos Klausner, an independent researcher and writer. Klausner is the former director of the San Francisco chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA), and worked in the architecture and design department at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.



Edith Heath, Coupe dinner plate, salad plates, mug, cup, bowls, 1947 (original design), Collection of Heath Ceramics

### **OPENING RECEPTION**

**Saturday, May 30, 2009**

**7:00 – 9:00 pm**

Opening Reception for *Edith Heath: Tabletop Modernist*, *Traffic*, *You See: The Early Years of The UC Davis Studio Art Faculty*, *Annie Lapin: Parallel Deliria*

\$5 admission

Free for PMCA Members

RSVP: 626-568-3665, ext. 14

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**About the PMCA:**

The Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) is dedicated to the exhibition of California art, architecture, and design from 1850 to the present. Informed by the state's rich mixture of cultures and inspired by its impressive geography, California art has long been defined by a spirit of freedom and experimentation. PMCA exhibitions and educational programs explore the cultural dynamics and influences unique to California that have shaped and defined art in all media.

**Hours:**

Wednesday – Sunday, 12:00 - 5:00 pm.

The Museum is closed July 4th, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas and New Year's Day.

**Admission:**

\$7 for Adults, \$5 for Seniors (65+) and Students with valid ID; free to PMCA Members and children under 12. Access for people with disabilities is provided.

**Location/Parking:**

The Museum is located at 490 East Union Street. From the 210 Freeway, take the Lake Avenue exit. Go south and take a right on Union Street. From the 110 Freeway/Downtown Los Angeles, follow the freeway until its end, then take Arroyo Parkway and turn right at Colorado, then left at Oakland to get to Union Street. Parking is available at the Museum.

**PMCA Tours:**

At this time, the museum does not offer regularly scheduled docent tours of our special exhibitions. However, docent tours are available to private groups for a fee of \$75. A non-refundable deposit of \$40 is due two weeks prior to the scheduled date in order to guarantee a tour. We regret that we are unable to accommodate tours for groups smaller than 10 or larger than 50 people. Before requesting a tour, please check the exhibition calendar to see which exhibitions will be available during your visit.

A discounted group rate of \$4 per person is available for groups of 20 or more, and free admission is offered to school groups of K-12 public school students. Please call to notify us at least one week in advance for these special admission rates.

For any questions or to make reservations for a tour or group rate, please call Shirlae Cheng at 626-568-3665 x17.

**PMCA Information:**

For information, the please call 626-568-3665 or visit the website: [www.pmcaonline.org](http://www.pmcaonline.org)