



# The Guild Shop

## A Renovated & Revitalized Venue for the Work of Professional Ontario Craftspeople

From its first space in a corner of Eaton's art deco College Street store, through its years in the Bloor and Bay area in the late '50s and the '60s, to its present location in bustling Yorkville, the Ontario Crafts Council's Guild Shop has been a vital part of Toronto's arts and culture scene. For 70 years -- through the depression, World War II, post-war expansion, economic booms and recessions and five moves -- The Guild Shop has promoted and provided an income source for Canada's leading craftspeople.

The Ontario Crafts Council is currently working with prominent Toronto designer and architect **Johnson Chou** and his Senior Associate and Project Architect **Silke Stadtmueller** to renovate The Guild Shop. When the OCC moved into the current location at 118 Cumberland Street in 1995, it had been a luggage shop. This is the first time that the space has been renovated to present professional craft work. It's crucial for The Guild Shop to be able to present the high-quality work of professional craftspeople in an environment with appropriately matched structural appearance and ambiance.

The Guild Shop has consistently offered fine Canadian craft reflecting the leading-edge tastes and trends of the times. The Guild Shop currently sells an extensive array of exquisitely handcrafted jewellery, ceramics, textiles, wood, and hand-blown glass objects. It also features cards, leather, and metal work. In addition to representing contemporary fine craft, The Guild Shop's Inuit and Native Gallery was the first Inuit art dealer in Toronto, and now carries an extensive array of Aboriginal art, including the annual print collection of the Cape Dorset and Pangnirtung communities. Throughout the year, exhibitions in the Inuit and Native gallery regularly show the work of promising emerging artists. The Guild Shop has the distinct privilege of representing not only provincial, but national Aboriginal arts through its Yorkville location in Toronto.

“In this fast-paced high-tech society, I feel a growing number of people, the general public, are feeling the need to possess articles - whether it's a ceramic teapot, a glass vase, a handmade chair - that are aesthetically tangible, have personality, and individual expression and a connection to the maker. These are contemplative objects that provide some relief in the anonymous clutter of mass production.” -- *Bruce Cochrane (in The Cutting Edge of Crafts by James Strecker)*

A detailed list of craft artists and organizations represented at The Guild Shop is online at [www.craft.on.ca](http://www.craft.on.ca). The Guild Shop is the primary location through which the OCC delivers needed earnings into the hands of its members, and the launch of the renovated and revitalized retail space is expected to exponentially increase earnings for the makers.

**The Grand Reopening of The Guild Shop will take place Thursday, June 5, 2008.** A reception will take place 5:30-8pm. The Guild Shop is located at 118 Cumberland St. in Yorkville.

**The Ontario Crafts Council** works to have craft recognized as a valuable part of life and the excellence of Ontario craft and craftspeople acknowledged across Canada and around the world. As a dynamic, member based, not-for-profit arts service organization, the OCC exists to significantly grow recognition and appreciation of craft and craftspeople by building a strong, talented, distinctive craft community and acting as an advocate on its behalf.

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