

# Key Dates: 1965-1993

• Jun. 23 - President Johnson authorizes the transfer of the U.S. Court of Claims Building in Washington DC to the Smithsonian Institution “as a gallery of arts, crafts and design...” reflecting “the ingenuity of our people...” (Skilled Work, p. 14). It opens as the Renwick Gallery, on Jan. 28, 1972.

• Sept. 29 - National Endowment for the Arts [NEA] and the National Endowment for the Humanities [NEH] established through the National Foundation on the Arts & Humanities Act, signed by Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson.

• Illinois Arts Council established.

• Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture founded on Chicago’s Southside.

• Museum of Contemporary Art founded.

• Apr.- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated in Memphis, sparking week-long riots across U.S. cities, including Chicago.

• Senator Robert F. Kennedy assassinated in Los Angeles, a Democratic Party presidential candidate.

• Aug.- Democratic Convention in Chicago. Mayor Richard J. Daley, amid concerns for violence, police use excessive force.

• The Artisans Shop and Gallery, Plaza del Lago, Wilmette, opens - represents over 350 craftsmen in all media (The Buyer’s Guide to Crafts, p. 14).

• The Handweavers Guild of America founded with over 1000 charter members.

• John Hancock Center completed.

• Dec. - Black Panther activist Fred Hampton assassinated in a plot by Cook County State’s Attorney, FBI and Chicago Police Department.

• Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art (UIMA) founded on Chicago’s Westside.

• The Darkroom founded - A photography studio for do-it-yourself developing, educational programs, (especially youth) in Chicago .

• Jan. - Midwest Clay Guild cooperative studio founded in Evanston, now currently in Skokie.

• Jan. 28 - Renwick Gallery opens to the public with 8 exhibitions in Washington D.C.

• National Women’s Caucus for Art is established, tied with the College Art Association.

• Chicago Women’s Caucus for Art chapter is established.

• Mindscape Gallery in Evanston opens, “featuring the works of over 350 designer/ craftsmen from around the U.S.” (The Buyer’s Guide to Crafts, p. 13).

• Sept. - Artemisia women’s co-op gallery formed by School of the Art Institute Chicago.

• ARC (Artists Residents Chicago) women-run gallery is founded.

★ **NEW ART EXAMINER** founded.

• Sears Tower completed. The tallest building in the world until 1998.

• President Nixon signs CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) into law, a jobs training program. It provides modest funds for such orgs. as the Chicago Artist’s Coalition.

• Jan. 12 - Chicago Women in Architecture founded.

• April 21 - Spertus Museum opens in the Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning & Leadership.

• The Donor’s Forum, Chicago established, philanthropy resource organization.

• Oct. 23 - Smart Museum, University of Chicago, opens to the public.

• Oct./Nov. issue of New Art Examiner announces a panel urging Chicago artists to unite, meeting at the Suburban Fine Arts Center in Highland Park, with Betty Fox the lead and James Rosenquist on the panel.

★ **CHICAGO ARTISTS COALITION** founded, a consequence of the Highland park meeting, according to director Arlene Rakoncay.

• Steppenwolf Theatre founded.

• The Crafts Report is founded, a monthly business magazine for beginner and professional craftspersons [covers art fairs, pricing, cost of doing business, etc.].

• Chicago ordinance authorizes the establishment of the Council of Fine Art, a 15-member mayor appointed panel to encourage support for the arts and its understanding.

• Robbins Clay founded as clay manufacturing company on Halsted and Grand. Becomes Lill Street Studios when it moves to Lill Street.

• Juried Fountains Square Arts Festival established in Evanston.

• Swedish American Museum Chicago founded.

• North Shore Weavers Guild is selected to host the Midwest Weavers Conference at Lake Forest College.

• Art Expo Navy Pier begins, started by John Wilson, a ceramicist.

• Mary and Leigh B. Block Gallery founded at Northwestern University.

• University of Illinois at Chicago [UIC] formed, a consolidation of UICC (at Chicago Circle) and UI at the Medical Center, also elevating it to the only public research university in the city.

• Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum founded, renamed in 2006 as National Museum of Mexican Art.

• Women of Color Quilters Network established by Carolyn Mazloomi.

• Near Northwest Arts Council foundational meetings occur.

• Illinois Artisans Program established, showcasing artisans juried into the program from the entire state. Its Chicago store is located in the Thompson Center.

• Stock market crash.

• Sapphires and Crystals founded by Marva Pitchford Jolly & Felicia Grant Preston. The collective is an outgrowth of the Mud People’s Black Women’s Resource Sharing Workshop founded by Jolly.

★ **RIVER NORTH FIRE** - decimates the city’s centralized art community, and, although no fault was found, was believed by many to be a result of faulty renovation work. Many, many artists lose entire series of works stored at galleries, and many galleries choose not to reopen elsewhere. The community vibe and dialogue generated by monthly gallery openings and programming, effectively end, a sentiment shared by many artists interviewed for this exhibition.

• Around the Coyote Arts fair/festival opens, Wicker Park, Bucktown - runs until 2010.

• President Ronald Reagan repeals CETA.

• Council on Fine Arts becomes the Chicago Office of Fine Arts and is combined with the Office of Special Events and Office of Film and Entertainment under the Dept. of Cultural Affairs.

• Near Northwest Arts Council [NNWAC] opens first home at the Flatiron Building in Wicker Park, remains there until 1996.

• Textile Arts Centre established, an outgrowth of the Weaving Workshop/ Textile Arts Centre.

• Near Northwest Art Council’s “Chicago Fire 2” exhibit of ceramics.

• North Shore Weavers Guild hosts “Convergence ‘88” - the 8th biennial meeting of the Handweavers Guild of America - an international gathering of weavers and fiber artists.

• SOFA (Sculpture, Objects, Functional Art) fair established as a continuous expo until 2019 when it is taken over by Intersect Chicago.