



Kerstin Ingrid Hedin McDaniel

September 11, 1936 - September 7, 2021

Textile artist Kerstin H. McDaniel, 84, died at her Asheville home in the company of her family on September 7, 2021 after several years of declining health that she met with characteristic courage and grace. Her life was a magical combination of art, education, service and family and her creative legacy will carry on through the multitude of works found in churches and sacred spaces across the country.

An artist to the core, Kerstin was born to Ragnhild and Anders Hedin in Boras, Sweden on September 11, 1936, and grew up in a family of talented artists and craftspersons. Her talent as a textile artist emerged as a very young child and continued into adulthood. She lived her belief that if she could make something with her hands, she could always support herself, a philosophy that carried her through a long and fruitful life as an artist and designer.

Kerstin's introduction to the United States was as an exchange student with the American Field Service in North Hollywood, California in 1954. She returned to study at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. Earning her degree in fashion design in 1959, she was honored with the Outstanding Design Student Award upon graduation.

An early career in fashion design began in Stockholm but she was soon called back to the US to serve as a designer for Hadley Cashmeres in New York,

with a manufacturing facility in Weaverville. Commuting from New York to Weaverville introduced her to Asheville which became her beloved home in 1963.

Kerstin met husband Holcombe McDaniel while designing costumes for Asheville Community Theatre in 1963. Together the McDaniels founded Gildafrox, a fine children's clothing company named for their daughter, Gilda, which enjoyed a strong following nationally until Kerstin and Holcombe chose to devote more time to family life.

Following her love of art and education, Kerstin discovered the art department at UNC-Asheville in the mid-1980s and completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree, graduating Magna Cum Laude with Art Department Distinction in 1989. Her study of painting and art history while at UNC-A influenced a transition in her art and led to her most rewarding and successful career path.

Kerstin's later career emerged through her involvement with The Cathedral of All Souls in Biltmore where she was a devoted and active member for over 50 years. Always creative, her roots in needlework blended with her training in painting and study of art history and Christian symbolism, and her career gradually shifted to a specialty of liturgical textiles. She developed a signature technique of "painting with fabric" that fused the disciplines of painting and needlework into a distinctive style.

Over the final 30 years of her career, Kerstin was commissioned to design and create professional banners, kneelers and vestments for hundreds of churches across the US. She was particularly proud to be commissioned to create altar hangings and banners for the new chapel at Virginia Theological Seminary, designed by Robert A. M. Stern and consecrated in 2015. Her largest body of liturgical work is found at The Cathedral of All Souls in Biltmore <https://www.allsoulscathedral.org/textiles> and she has secular textile

pieces and paintings in the collections of Mission Hospital, CarePartners and UNC-A, among many other private collections.

Of all her many interests outside of her art, Kerstin's involvement with All Souls was her passion. Widely respected for her wisdom and knowledge, she served on the vestry, chaired the Altar Guild, served on the Cathedral Arts Commission and many other special committees over the years.

Kerstin was also an enthusiastic supporter of the growing arts community in Asheville. She was a founding member of the Asheville Gallery of Art, Asheville's first cooperative gallery founded in 1988 in downtown Asheville, leading the way for many future galleries to open downtown. Kerstin also enjoyed serving as a docent at Asheville Art Museum for many years. She took great delight in watching Asheville grow from the quiet town of the 1960s to the current bustling art destination.

Kerstin will be greatly missed by daughter Gilda McDaniel and partner Stephan Meyers of Pittsboro, North Carolina and sisters Annastina Sandring of Drottningholm, Sweden and Inga Hade of Boras, Sweden and their families and many dear friends. She was preceded in death by husband Holcombe McDaniel and brother Svante Hedin of Gotland, Sweden. Her humor, vitality, enthusiasm, good cheer and kind generosity will live on in our memory. Gilda wishes to thank Joyce Ad-cock and Stephan Meyers for their gentle and loving care.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00am on Friday, November 19, 2021 at The Cathedral of All Souls. Memorial contributions in Kerstin's honor can be made to The Cathedral of All Souls in Biltmore.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

NOV **19**. 11:00 AM.

Cathedral Of All Souls

Tribute Wall



“ *Kerstin Ingrid Hedin McDaniel*

October 09, 2023 at 01:52 AM



“ *Kerstin Ingrid Hedin McDaniel*

October 08, 2023 at 10:49 PM



“ *Kerstin Ingrid Hedin McDaniel*

October 24, 2022 at 11:11 PM



“ *Kerstin entered my life in 1963, when she married Holcombe McDaniel and came to live next door to my family on Pine Tree Road, Asheville NC. I was already in college and rarely at home, but we became good friends while I was at home, especially after the birth of Gilda in December 1965, whom I have called my "little sister" ever since. When I delved into needlepoint works, Kerstin always stretched and stuffed them into pillows or pictures. My husband and I were always fascinated by what else Kerstin was doing in her studio, from reverse painting to her unusually creative kneelers and altar cloths. Our kitchen proudly displays her reverse painting of the garden behind her house, which was fully visible from my bedroom window!*

Susan Severn Schearer - October 10, 2021 at 08:59 PM

RG

“ Dear Gilda. John and I extend our sincere sympathy at the passing of your Mother. We have wonderful memories of her and her gracious kindness to those of us fortunate to know her. We fondly remember the “Sadie” days and especially how sweet your parents were to her.

They also raised a very talented young lady, one that I was happy to leave in charge of my children.

Your Mother’s artistic talents were amazing. She has passed that articulate attention to detail to you.

Seeing her in her yard on my neighborhood walks and having a chat was always a great pleasure.

John and Rebecca

Rebecca Gilbert - September 20, 2021 at 02:42 PM

CO

“ Dear Gilda, I’m so sorry to hear about your mom. I’ll always have fond memories of her voice, laugh and the feel of her home. Over the years I always looked up the hill when driving by and would sometimes see her in the garden. I miss you and love you, Carson

Carson Ojamaa - September 19, 2021 at 03:35 PM

RI

“ Dear Gilda,

We are deeply sorry for your immense loss. Please accept our heartfelt condolences. Our thoughts are with you during this difficult time. We have such wonderful and meaningful memories of your Mom. Fondly, Ruth and Otto

Ruth and Otto ILG - September 11, 2021 at 03:27 PM