

OBITUARY / *Carmen Lamanna*

Gallery owner supported non-traditional, critical art

BY JOHN BENTLEY MAYS
Visual Arts Critic

TORONTO — Carmen Lamanna, one of Canada's most famous dealers in contemporary Canadian art, has died in Toronto. A spokesman at the Carmen Lamanna gallery said he died yesterday morning at Toronto's Princess Margaret Hospital, two months after he was found to have lung cancer. Lamanna was 64.

Lamanna was well-known for his support of the new, unconventional Conceptual Art that emerged in Toronto after 1970. He continued to show and advocate non-traditional,

critical art practices throughout his 25-year career, despite a small domestic commercial market for this work. Among the accomplished artists whose careers were launched in the gallery have been Robin Collyer, Ian Carr-Harris, Vincent Tangredi, Shirley Wiitasalo and General Idea.

During the revival of easel painting in the early 1980s, Lamanna expanded his stable to include a number of notable new Toronto painters, Rae Johnson, John Brown, Joanne Tod and Marc de Guerre, among others.

Lamanna was born in Naples in 1927, the son of a master woodcarver and art dealer, and emigrated to Canada in 1951 with other members of his family, settling in Toronto. He plied the family trade of woodcarving, framing and restoring artworks until 1966, when he opened the Carmen Lamanna Gallery in Toronto's Yorkville district. The gallery moved four years ago to King Street West.

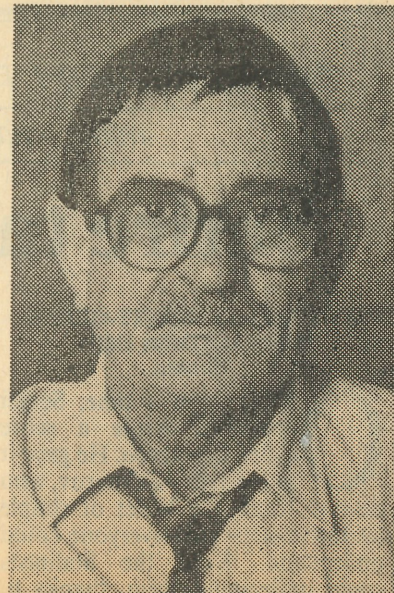
Last year, a French book said Lamanna was one of the 200 best dealers in contemporary art in the world.

He was awarded a Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977, and was made an honorary fellow of the Ontario College of Art in 1988. He was a member of the Professional Art Dealers Association of Canada.

According to a gallery representative, it is the family's intention that the Carmen Lamanna Gallery "continue to operate in the same spirit that it has operated for the last 25 years." The gallery will remain open, though no arrangements have been made to name a successor to the directorship.

Lamanna leaves his wife, Concetta, and his father, Frank, both of Toronto; four children, Frank, Rocco, Albert and Sylvana; four sisters and two brothers, all of Toronto.

Visiting hours are 2-4 p.m. and 6-9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the Bernardo Funeral Home, 2960 Dufferin St. A requiem mass will take place on Monday at a time to be determined at St. Bernard of Clairvaux Roman Catholic Church, 1789 Lawrence Ave. W. Interment will take place at Prospect Cemetery.



Carmen Lamanna