



## **John Harris Wilmer**

**October 2, 1947 - February 1, 2019**

John Harris Wilmer, 71, passed away on February 1, 2019 at Coming Home Hospice in San Francisco. A SF resident for more than 26 years, he was also hailed as the “Unofficial Mayor of Caledonia St.” in Sausalito where he had his art studio and antique restoration business for almost two decades. John absolutely lived life to the fullest and even continued to do so throughout the last six years following his cancer diagnosis.

Born in St. Paul, MN, son of Jane Wilmer (nee Harris) and the late Dr. Harry A. Wilmer II, John’s early years were spent in Rochester, MN, and then primarily in Palo Alto, CA. He attended Stanford Elementary, Terman Junior High, and graduated from Palo Alto High School in 1965. At Paly High, John played varsity football, was active in track and field, and participated in the Free Speech Movement.

In the mid-’60s, John moved to NYC to attend the School of Visual Arts, where he lived and created art in his Bowery loft. John also attended UC Riverside, as well as Western Washington University, and received his MFA from the University of Utah. While in Utah in the ’70s, John taught art, painted, and ran an antique shop in Salt Lake City where he met and married Liisa Johnson. John enjoyed first-time fatherhood with the birth of their lovely daughter, Tiina Maija.

In the late ’80s, John lived in Santa Fe, NM, then returned to SF where he continued with his art and antique restoration. During that time, John married Karen Parker, with whom he welcomed the birth of a son, Jacob Benjamin. Though he remained living in SF, he moved his studio to the Sausalito location on Caledonia St.

A passionate man, John laughed both heartily and easily, and relished holding court to spin stories and try out his latest jokes. Always active, he loved traveling, golfing with Jacob, walking his beloved Shelties, being part of the Ecstatic Dance community, playing guitar, listening to great music, reading, and savoring spoonfuls of ice cream in between it all. Additionally, he restored classic cars and all kinds of artifacts, was a voracious collector, and an avid bargain hunter at estate sales.

But John's ultimate passion was creating art -- breathing life and original perspective into his work. His talents included printmaking, photography and, of course, painting. To this day, part of his extensive collection remains at the Sausalito studio, now known as Tivoli.

A spiritual person, John's larger-than-life, fun-loving, compassionate and generous nature impacted people throughout his life. He will be greatly missed by family, friends, and all whom he touched. The family is grateful for all of John's friends, his tight Sausalito community, all the Hospice angels, and all the people who lovingly cared for him. Lastly, a heartfelt thanks is extended to John's devoted friend, Martin Hickel.

John is survived by his mother, Jane Harris Wilmer of Salado, TX; brother Thomas Wilmer (Beth) of Morro Bay, CA; brother James Wilmer (Linda) of Scottsdale, AZ; sister Mary Wilmer Mills (Peter) of Los Altos, CA; daughter Tiina Thorley (Jay) of Salt Lake City, UT; son Jacob Wilmer of Merced, CA; sister-in-law Lynn Wilmer; nieces Arianne Huerta and Celena Estrada and their families; and the lights of his life, grandsons Rockwell and Axel Thorley. John was preceded in death by his father, Dr. Harry A. Wilmer II; brother Harry A. (Hank) Wilmer III; and niece Jennifer Wilmer.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date in Sausalito, CA. In lieu of flowers, the family requests any donations be made to either Coming Home Hospice or Hospice by the Bay, both of San Francisco. We are grateful for the gift of their thoughtful and loving care.

