



## Thomas Molyneaux

March 16, 1943 - January 24, 2020

Thomas Molyneaux, 76, of Kissimmee, Florida, passed away at his home on January 24, 2020 from natural causes. He is survived by his daughter, Monique Marietta, grandchildren, Tyler and Chloe Marietta, brother, Stewart Molyneaux, sister, Lorraine Jusino, niece and nephews.

He was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He lived in Detroit, Michigan most of his life before making Kissimmee, Florida his final destination. Tom graduated from Redford High School and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Industrial Design from the Center for Creative Studies. He began his career as a Product Designer at Ford & Earl Design associates and later became an Associate Professor and Chairman of the Industrial Design Department at the Center for Creative Studies. His achievements in the design world did not go unnoticed, he received multiple National Design Excellence and teaching awards.

Driven by his passion for all things in the natural world, he took a break teaching design and turned his focus on educating the public as the Supervisor of the Belle Isle Urban Nature Center from 1976-1981. During his career at the nature center, he rescued, rehabilitated and released many birds and other wild animals that were lucky enough to fall under his care.

Tom spent his free time nurturing his beautiful wildflower gardens and

exploring the Detroit River on his boat "Rainbow Chaser". Those fortunate to have ventured out on "Rainbow Chaser" were met with an adventurous thrill ride full of surprises. He always went out of his way to show his boating guests a time to remember.

He lived out his life in his Florida home on East Lake Tohopekaliga nestled among giant trees laced with sphagnum moss surrounded by flowering tropical plants. His days were spent creating new and meaningful works of art in the company of his two faithful birds chattering in the background. He succeeded at living an extraordinary passionate life filled with adventure, kindness and love. He will be sorely missed by all that were fortunate to have known and loved "The Rainbow Kid".

In celebration of his life, memorial services will be held Saturday, February 22nd at 3:00 p.m. at Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 705 W. Eleven Mile Road (4 blocks E of Woodward), Royal Oak, MI 48067.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Gathering

FEB **22**. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak  
705 W. Eleven Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48067  
(248) 541-7000  
royal@sullivanfh.com  
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

## Memorial Service

FEB **22**. 3:00 PM (ET)

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# Tribute Wall

BL

“ Hello all, I wanted to share my condolences and share a little of my experience with Thom. I attended CCS from 88-90. I had Tom as an instructor for a couple of classes. He ignited my passion for concept design and even pitched a toy concept that I came up with in class to one of the toy companies he was working with at the time. I always enjoyed his stories that he would tell, one in particular about crashing his RC plane into the side of his boat, as he tried to push the limits on just how close he do a pass....but the thing I remember most about him was that he was looking out for me. When I was a sophomore in the trans program, he pulled me aside with 2 weeks left in studio, and let me know that I was pursuing the wrong proportions on my concept, and that the instructor at the time was just going to let me fail. He suggested revisiting the proportions of my concept. So that evening the model I had, which I had been working on for several weeks, became a sailplane straight into the dumpster, and started over. It was a challenge, but I was able to create an all new model and support renderings by the deadline. I ended up with a C in the class, but at least I did not fail. It was probably my best work at the college and all because Thom took the time to care. He wasn't even my instructor that semester. Here is a pic of that model that he helped to inspire. Enjoy!



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**Bruce Lee** - July 04, 2025 at 12:28 AM

DW

“ I am also a graduate of the College for Creative Studies ('93). I actually started in 1980 and went for 3 years before “dropping out”. I dropped out due to a personal tragedy and knew that Tom also experienced a personal tragedy around this time...Tom had already taken me under his wing in my Sophomore and Junior years and he was the one instructor I felt I could relate to and understood what I was going through. Fast forward 7 years and I made my way back to CCS in the Fall of '91... first day back at school and Tom is sitting in a classroom teaching a class and calls me in as I walk by and says “so you’re back Wikle!” ...I was overjoyed and Tom selected me as one of his student teachers after my first semester...what a boost of confidence helping Tom teach design Theory to the younger students! So it goes without saying that Tom was by far the most influential and impactful teacher of my entire design education! He was a warm and passionate human being and will be greatly missed!

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David Wikle - December 28, 2021 at 08:17 PM

GS

“ Tom was my teacher in 1988. He was a force of nature in the classroom. He took his job seriously which meant he was more interested in growing vs coddling us. He was hard but fair. Stern but, in his own way, loving. In life we have the opportunity to “let” people shape us. We invite them in. Tom helped shape me and for this I’m grateful.

*Each fall we get fruit flies in our kitchen from garden vegetables. Each fall I curse those little buggers. Each fall I snicker as I watch them weave around our 3 level, chromed wire fruit bowl. Each fall I think “Fruit fly - fly thru”. I bet hundreds of students know exactly what I’m referring to. Because he helped shape your perceptions too.*

*Thank you Tom.*

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**gordon stannis** - October 25, 2021 at 09:02 PM



“ What a beautiful tribute to Tom’s life. We did not have the pleasure of knowing him for very long.. all of our interactions however were spent talking about the beauty of nature, animals, flowers, and birds. He very much enjoyed the sunrise view over the lake here in Kissimmee.

*It’s crazy to think that he was right under our noses up in Michigan as we were both raised right in that area. Our hearts break for family and friends at the loss of such a kind and brightly talented man. Our thoughts and prayers are with you!*



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**Hilary N Jordan Walters** - February 24, 2020 at 05:40 AM

JH

“ Hello Molyneaux family: I send my sincere condolences to all of you. I was a friend of Tom and Doug many years, ago. Tom and I reconnected on Facebook and had a 2 hour phone conversation in 2016. I enjoyed catching up and found him to be the same great guy I knew as a teen. May he rest in peace.

*Sincerely, Josie Cleveland Haddad*

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**Josie Haddad** - February 19, 2020 at 07:12 PM

AR

“ In 1988 I entered CCS as a very scared 40 yr old. My home area in Ohio had been devastated by plant closures and I managed to find CCS. My very first class was Prof Molyneaux for Product in Mini-Studio. He was just a little older but after awhile, I felt that he was mentoring me and he was one of my heroes!. He never really seemed to hover over me, but always seemed to be available. One day in the quads he pulled up a seat and was really interested in knowing me. I mean asking questions about everything. I never really had many art classes; High School I had two. Tom was helpful. He would correct drawings before rendering in his mini-studio for everyone. Can't tell you how good I felt when he looked at my drawings and he said they didn't need any help!  
I talked to him by e-mail awhile ago when Florida had a hurricane. Showed him some products I had designed over all this time and being pet products, he liked them and had noticed them in PetSmart. Always kept in touch in Detroit and after, while working.  
It's hard to put into words what I felt for him. Like a good friend. there weren't many instructors back then in 1988 thru 1991. Everyone of them was helpful, but for some reason, I felt connected to Tom. I'm going to miss him but I always remember his classes and the things I learned. Especially when he got mad at me for something!  
Good-bye Tom. Thanks for your help. I miss you, but we will meet up again.  
Allan G Ross

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Allan Ross - February 19, 2020 at 02:43 PM