

R|A|M

New and Novel 2009: Recent Gifts to RAM's Collection

August 9, 2009 – January 17, 2010

- RAM continues to collect works on paper, paintings and sculpture. Included in this exhibition are recent acquisitions, primarily in photography.
- RAM's goal is to place artworks created in contemporary craft media within the context of painting and sculpture movements of the same time period. Increasingly, the museum is presenting displays of craft works alongside prints, drawings and photographs to demonstrate their commonalities, rather than their differences.
- A grouping of photographs, by a variety of artists, depicts famous people, such as Elvis, James Dean, James Joyce, the Beatles, and Humphrey Bogart with Lauren Bacall and their son.
- Also on display is a photograph by **Arno Rafael Minkkinen**, which appears to be a digitally skewed image of a figure posing in an unusual fashion. However, they are actually unedited images of the artist physically positioning his body within the landscape, and posing to create stunning images.
- *Rule (Balllerini)*, 1997, is a good example of the figurative ceramic sculpture of **Doug Jeck**, whose work is fragmented, dismembered, defeated and highly realistic. The pose alludes to Greek and Roman statuary, but **Jeck** purposefully cuts off arms and legs, sometimes reattaching a replacement hand, though more frequently leaving the figure without some of its limbs
- **Silver Gelatin Print** – a "traditional" black and white photographic print using sensitized silver-halide light-sensitive emulsion. This is usually (though not always) a darkroom-based process. Prints may be on fiber-based paper or on resin-coated paper stock, and are often toned for archival purposes and/or to change the image color. The colors most often used are selenium, gold, and sepia toners.

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Collection Focus – Michael Lucero at RAM

September 12, 2009 – January 17, 2010

- In the last 18 months, the Racine Art Museum has received an impressive number of Michael Lucero works from a variety of collectors. RAM is debuting these 12 gifts in a Collection Focus show, to demonstrate their significance to art collectors, as well as the importance of Lucero's work in the field of ceramics. They are joined by three Lucero work that were already in RAM's collection.
- RAM's collection of Lucero's work is now a rich grouping that spans from 1983 through 2007, forming a detailed documentation of his career achievements.
- Michael Lucero's work came to the attention of museums, galleries and the media early in his career. Today, he is recognized as one of the most important contemporary ceramic sculptors in the world, producing works that are both thought-provoking and entertaining.
- Lucero is a unique artist of international significance, whose sculptures are well-known in the ceramics community, and respected by a wide range of curators and critics. He has mastered an ability to bring forth faithful reproductions of imagery from recognized cultures and artists, while simultaneously making these images his own through his imagination and wit.
- Lucero was born in Tracy, California in 1953 and received his BA from Humboldt State University in Arcata, California in 1975. In 1978, he received his MFA from the University of Washington in Seattle. Lucero's talent and early promise were rapidly acknowledged when, in 1979, he received a National Endowment for the Arts Artist Fellowship-one of three he has been awarded in his career.
- In his work, Lucero wittily references the history of art from around the world, including European, Native American, and pre-Columbian cultures. His surfaces are covered with lush glaze paintings and beautifully rendered representational drawings.
- Much of his imagery stems from an ongoing interest in nature, though Lucero's forms also demonstrate a finely honed knowledge of art history combined with broader observations of popular culture.
- Lucero's parents frequently took family trips from their home in California to visit his grandparents and other relatives in New Mexico. The natural wonders and scenery of the American Southwest fascinated him as a child. Native American pottery, textiles and artifacts offered for sale in roadside trading posts inspired Lucero to value objects produced by the hands of artists.
- Lucero is intensely aware of artists and styles that have preceded him; however, the subject of his work has become the exchange that takes place when diverse groups collide with each other and images from high art and popular culture coexist.