



### **Small Gifts from Big Donors – Part 3**

October 8, 2017 – February 4, 2018

“Collectors occupy an incredibly important place in the art world ecosystem. They are often the first to purchase new work from an emerging talent and new series by established figures. This provides financial aid, but even more importantly, serious encouragement that sends a motivated artist back into the studio. Through their purchases, collectors also assist galleries which, in turn, provide exhibition opportunities that broaden the audience through further exposure. By sharing information about artists with other enthusiasts and opening their homes to interested groups, collectors advocate on behalf of the artist, creating a larger pool of new collectors. They bring new talent to the attention of museum curatorial staff and provide financial contributions for exhibition and collection programs.”

–Bruce W. Pepich, Executive Director and Curator of Collections at the Racine Art Museum  
*Collecting Collectors/Constructing a Collection: RAM at Five Years*, SOFA Chicago 2008,  
The Fifteenth Anniversary Sculptural Objects and Functional Art Fair Catalogue

When opening boxes from donors, RAM staff have often expressed the time-honored phrase, “good things come in small packages.” Taking that saying at face value, this exhibition series focuses on the small-scale gifts of 12 significant donors to RAM’s collection. These supporters have given large numbers of artworks over the years. Thanks to their gifts, combined with those from other donors, the museum now owns over 9,000 pieces, making it America’s largest contemporary craft collection.

RAM’s holdings have grown due, in large part, to the generosity of people who appreciate the scope and scale of what the museum offers. They donate works of art—sometimes pieces with which they have lived in their homes—as they appreciate the respect and attention that a public collection will be able to provide to artists whose work they admire.

The collectors honored in this exhibition series include **Dale and Doug Anderson, Devra Breslow, Gail M. Brown, David and Jacqueline Charak, Camille and Alex Cook, Lloyd Cotsen, Robert W. Ebendorf and Aleta Braun, Daniel Greenberg and Susan Steinhauser, Jane and Arthur Mason, Donna Moog, Donna Schneier and Leonard Goldberg, and Donald and Carol Wiiken.**

Throughout 2017, selections from their gifts will be featured, with four donors represented at a time. Some have also donated larger sized and/or two-dimensional works that do not fit the parameters of the gallery space. This gallery was chosen to offer visitors an intimate viewing and to see “at a glance” what types of work have appealed to these collectors.

# R|A|M

Independent curator and contemporary art jewelry collector **Gail M. Brown** has worked with organizations, such as the Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) and the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA), as well as craft museums and galleries across the country, to bring contemporary craft to a broader audience.

Brown has curated over a dozen contemporary craft exhibitions including: ***The Edge of Grace*** in 2006 and ***Fresh Figurines*** in 2011 at the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, Massachusetts; ***RE/ACTION(S)*** at the St. Louis Craft Alliance and ***Jewelry in Motion*** at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, both in 2009; ***The Art of Seduction*** at Howard Community College in 2012; and NCECA-sponsored ***The Evocative Garden*** in 2017 at the Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in Portland, Oregon. Brown has juried Craft USA, Fiber National, and ***The Body Adorned*** for SNAG. She is also a frequent contributor to ***Art Jewelry Forum***, a non-profit organization that has been advocating for international contemporary art jewelry since 1997.

Brown's ongoing promotion of contemporary craft, particularly art jewelry, led her to donate nearly 150 pieces to Racine Art Museum over the last six years from such notable jewelers and metalsmiths as **Carolyn Morris Bach, Donna D'Aquino, Robert W. Ebendorf, Lisa Gralnick, Arthur Hash, Nel Linssen, and Kiff Slemmons**. Brown and her husband Robert have also donated over a dozen teapots, which adds to RAM's significant holdings of contemporary teapots. Thanks to donors like Brown, art jewelry makes up more than ten percent of RAM's 10,000 piece collection.

Retired business owner **David Charak** and his wife **Jacqueline Charak** were first introduced to RAM and its collections through gallerist and ceramic arts supporter **Leslie Ferrin**, owner of the Leslie Ferrin Gallery in Massachusetts. As a collector of primarily ceramic works, including many teapots, the Charaks began donating works to the museum in 2004. Their initial gift of a dozen contemporary teapots added to RAM's growing teapot collection, which, like the rest of the permanent collection, increased rapidly after the opening of the museum's new downtown campus in 2003.

In the last fifteen years, the Charaks have donated nearly 200 pieces, including 118 teapots, making them responsible for nearly a fourth of RAM's contemporary teapot collection and RAM's second largest donor of teapots.

Though Jacqueline passed in 2008, David has continued collecting and donating works to bring contemporary ceramics to a broader audience. Like fellow St. Louis collector **Donna Moog**, the teapots given by the Charaks range from the functional to the sculptural, and include artists like **Robert Arneson, Stephen Dixon, Jack Earl, Sergei Isupov, Richard Milette, Richard Marquis, and Richard Notkin**.

# R|A|M

The Charaks' donations to RAM have also included ceramicists **Chris Antemann** and **Bennett Bean**, glass artist **Dale Chihuly**, fiber artists **Carol Eckert** and **John Garrett**—whose work was featured in this year's traveling exhibition ***The Box Project: Uncommon Threads***, which was co-organized by RAM—and woodworker **Ron Kent**, among others.

Los Angeles area collectors **Daniel Greenberg**, owner of ElectroRent, and his wife, legislative attorney **Susan Steinhauser** first came across art glass in the 1970s at Kurland/Summers Gallery (the first gallery in Los Angeles to focus solely on contemporary studio glass). Over the last five decades, Greenberg and Steinhauser have amassed a private collection of nationally and internationally acclaimed artists who primarily use glass as a medium.

Almost from the beginning, the couple was also interested in philanthropy. Though they continued to collect glass privately, in 1982, they partnered with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) to build that museum's own collection of contemporary glass. LACMA now has over 100 pieces of art glass, most acquired with the help of Steinhauser and Greenberg. Just as important as what you collect," say Dan and Susan, "is what you do with it. As a collector, you have a responsibility to get work to the public, whether through gifts, speaking, loans, visits, or writing."<sup>1</sup>

Beginning in 2012, in recognition of the fiftieth anniversary of the studio glass movement, Greenberg and Steinhauser began donating large portions of their more than 400 piece collection to other museums including the Corning Museum of Glass, the Honolulu Museum of Art, and the Chrysler Museum of Art. One of their recent gifts of 32 pieces to the Minnesota Institute of Art was the subject of the 2013 exhibition ***Gifts of Modern and Contemporary Glass from Daniel Greenberg and Susan Steinhauser***.

Greenberg and Steinhauser, who shared the museum's philosophy of collecting the work of artists in-depth, often gathering five or more pieces by a single artist, began donating to RAM in 2014. Since then, Greenberg and Steinhauser have gifted nearly 100 pieces by studio glass luminaries like **Harvey K. Littleton**, **Joel Philip Myers**, **Dan Dailey**, and **Michael Glancy**, as well as vintage glass from **René Lalique**, and by noted European artists **Zoltán Bohus**, **Klaus Moje**, and **Lino Tagliapietra**. Greenberg and Steinhauser, having divested themselves of much of their glass collection, have begun collecting photography with plans to eventually donate that collection to public institutions. Greenberg's mother, **Ruth C. Greenberg**, has also donated work to RAM's collection.

A well-known philanthropist and an emeritus board member of the Contemporary Art Museum in St. Louis, collector **Donna Moog** has generously given 348 pieces to RAM over the last 20 years. Mostly interested in ceramic, her gifts have also included works in fiber and wood, but it was her contribution of 254 teapots in 2000 that greatly influenced the nature of RAM's collection.

# R|A|M

Moog began collecting teapots in the 1980s and has collected contemporary teapots from some of the twentieth century's most notable ceramicists including **Ralph Bacerra, Jerry Berta, Marek Cecula, Annette Corcoran, Paul Dresang, Leopold Foulem, Michael Lucero, Warren MacKenzie, Richard Marquis, Akio Takamori, and Beatrice Wood.**

The teapot is widely considered the most challenging of clay forms to create. Whether hand built or wheel thrown, the potter must create a lid, handle, and spout, as well as a body. As vessels, the teapots Moog collected range from more traditional and functional forms to the purely sculptural.

Her collection debuted at RAM in ***Tea Anyone? The Donna Moog Teapot Collection***, which was one of the first exhibitions shown at museum's newly opened downtown campus in the inaugural year of 2003. Since then, Moog's teapots have been included in numerous exhibitions, including ***Treasure Hunt: Teapots*** in 2006 and this year's ***Variations on a Theme: Teapots from RAM's Collection***, as well as ***Time for Tea: Ceramic Teapots from the Racine Art Museum's Collection***, which was on display at Dane County Regional Airport in Madison, Wisconsin in 2015.

Moog originally purchased her collection to be shown in her own home, which she treated as a rotating exhibition space. Her decision to share her holdings with a wider audience has encouraged other collectors to contribute to RAM's teapot collection, making it one of the largest in the country, including over 500 works.

## Endnote

1. <http://blog.cmog.org/2013/08/22/donor-profile-daniel-greenberg-susan-steinhauser/>