



Open Storage: RAM Showcases Glass Archives

February 2 – August 9, 2020

Historically, collection-building for museums has gone on behind-the-scenes. In the last decade, more institutions have offered transparency regarding how collections are developed, stored, and conserved. **Open Storage** offers a series of exhibitions that clarify this process by drawing attention to some of RAM's particular strengths—collecting the work of artists in-depth and establishing archives that further document their working processes and careers. While RAM frequently talks about the importance of gifts from donors' estates, archive building—both by artists and institutions—is critically important for the field because it offers a more comprehensive look at creative activity.

This exhibition features the work of four glass pioneers—**Dan Dailey, Michael Glancy, Joel Philip Myers, and Mark Peiser**—through multiple examples of their work. These artists pushed the medium technically and aesthetically, shaping a field that was just starting to unfold in the last half of the twentieth century. **RAM Showcases Glass Archives** is not a survey of the dynamism and fluctuation in glass today. This show does not reflect the significant contributions that have been made in recent decades by women like **Karen LaMonte, Ginny Ruffner, Lisabeth Sterling, Ann Wolff, and Toots Zynsky**; nor does it take into account the great variety of ways in which glass is now being used in jewelry, installations, and mixed media presentations. While RAM has examples of these types of work, they have not yet reached numbers to qualify as archival. If donation trends persist, this has the potential to change over time.

The combination of artists in this show demonstrates how RAM acquires the work of nationally and internationally recognized artists as well as by those who have called the local area home as they built their artistic reputations.

Over the years, RAM has paid attention to noteworthy artists through **Collection Focus** shows that featured multiple works by a single maker. In 2019, the museum launched a series of archive focus exhibitions with **Treasure Trove: Establishing Jewelry and Metal Archives at RAM**. The archive series exhibitions—like those on display this spring that emphasize ceramics, fiber, glass, wood, artists' books, and regional artists—exemplify RAM's status as North America's largest contemporary craft collection while also drawing attention to the institution's overall diversity of holdings.

Exhibitions such as these not only outline the work of an artist—which is shaped by personal perspective, culture, the time in which it was made, and numerous other factors—but also underscore the imperative role that RAM plays in documenting contemporary craft and works on paper.

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While this series is organized according to type of material used or object created, it is worth noting that institutional collections—even if they begin with strictly defined parameters—often have to modify how they catalog the work included. For example, when archives come from an artist directly, they may also include personal photographs, studio tools, or other items that offer compelling insight into the creative process but do not fit into precisely defined artwork categories.

These exhibitions, drawn from RAM's holdings, also highlight noteworthy statistics—namely that, by current count, 40% of the artists in the collection are women. This number, which is consistently increasing, is already substantially greater than the percentages calculated at other organizations with permanent collections and active exhibition programs. This has been achieved at RAM by considering the work of different genders on equal playing terms. And, notably, it has been helped by open-minded donors who have been interested in collecting quality work regardless of gender.

If RAM's collection is broken into groups based on materials used, works made with clay would comprise the largest category. Significantly, it is worth noting that three of the most-collected ceramic artists at RAM are women—**Sandra Byers**, **Mara Superior**, and **Beatrice Wood**. While not featured in the galleries at this time, Mara Superior is the most-collected ceramic artist at RAM overall with 33 pieces and printmaker **Beth Van Hoesen** holds the honor of being RAM's most-collected artist regardless of media. Van Hoesen is represented to date with 307 works including prints, watercolors, drawings, and metal printing plates.

The classic vases, Egyptian or Greek especially, have a voice for me. They are purposeful, often conveying thoughts or capturing a moment in time...They are about humanity, not about process. This meaningful concept extends the format of the case beyond form, to a different kind of communication...Following this format I try to convey a feeling with some of my vases, specifically the vases with drawings. Humor is my favorite. When somebody laughs out loud at one of my pieces I get a kick from that moment which dispels any doubts that may have crept [sic] into my head regarding the necessary seriousness of art.

–Dan Dailey

Dan Dailey was born in Philadelphia in 1947. He received his BFA from the Philadelphia College of Art and his MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, where he studied under world-renowned glass artist **Dale Chihuly**, whose work can also be found in RAM's permanent collection. In 1973, Dailey founded the glass department at the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, but also taught at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, Washington. His work has been shown nationally and internationally in more than 250 shows, including a retrospective at the Renwick

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Gallery of the Smithsonian Museum, Washington, DC. In addition to his individual sculptures, Dailey has worked for the French glass company Crisallerie Daum as a designer for more than 20 years. He has also created architectural pieces, commissioned by individuals, corporations, and other institutions. Now retired from teaching, Dailey continues to create boundary-pushing work that combines humor and social commentary with a nod to, and reverence for, historical pieces. There are currently a dozen works by Dailey in RAM's collection.

I look to everything in life as a derivative of the square or circle, every form comes from that including the really organic ones, so I'm constantly looking at nature and I always see squares, rectangles, triangles, circles, curved lines...I am trying to glorify not me and my own efforts, more the diversity and the brilliance of nature.

–Michael Glancy

Born in Detroit in 1950, **Michael Glancy** began working in glass in 1970 while studying at the University of Denver, where he received his BFA in 1973. Glancy also has both his BFA in sculpture and his MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, where he studied with renowned glass artist **Dale Chihuly**. Glancy has served as adjunct faculty at both the Rhode Island School of Design and the Pilchuck Glass School. Combining a range of glass work techniques, including grinding, sand blasting, and carving, Glancy's unique pieces seamlessly fuse metal and glass into organic forms that resemble the structures of cells, chloroplasts, and microscopic landscapes. Widely recognized as a prominent innovator in the field of studio glass, Glancy's work is represented in numerous international museums and collections, including RAM, which currently has ten of his works.

Press the material to the utmost, and it will suggest ideas and creative avenues to the expressive artist...I permit the glass to sag, flop, stop, start, stretch; I control and yet am dictated by the glass. As I paint and draw on the glass, the glass form reveals the drawing, adapts to its shape, distorts and expands as it clothes and envelops itself in my drawing.

–Joel Philip Myers

Joel Philip Myers was born in 1934 in Paterson, New Jersey, and graduated in 1954 from the Parsons School of Design with a focus on advertising design. He went on to study ceramics in Copenhagen, Denmark, before returning to the US and earning both his BFA and MFA from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University. Myers was Director of Design at **Blenko Glass Company**, where he began to experiment with glass in the factory, before taking up teaching at Illinois State University, Normal in 1970. There, Myers established the University's studio glass program and spent the next 27 years influencing generations of glassblowers. His manipulations of color and transparency raised questions regarding the use and potential use of glass as an artistic medium. A Life Member of the Glass Art Society and a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant, Myers is also a Fellow of the American Craft Council. He is the best represented glass artist in RAM's collection, with 24 works acquired to date.

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My pieces all begin with a feeling in my gut. Then I think about it, identify it, visualize it, make sketches and models. Sometimes all that comes together into what I think would be a worthwhile piece. Sometimes that takes over a year. Sometimes never.

–Mark Peiser

Highly experimental glass artist **Mark Peiser** began his career as an industrial designer in Chicago after studying Electrical Engineering at Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, and receiving his BS in design from the Illinois Institute of Technology. He left his job in the mid-1960s to attend the DePaul University School of Music where he studied piano, and then went on to the Penland School of Craft in North Carolina where he learned glassblowing. After five weeks at Penland, he was made the school's first Resident Craftsman in Glass. Peiser has tenaciously challenged the capabilities of glass—technically, aesthetically, emotionally, and sometimes his own body—spending up to 18 hours at a time hot-working a single vase. Peiser is a founder of the Glass Art Society of which he is an Honorary Lifetime Member. He is also the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Grant and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Grant. Peiser was named an American Craft Council Fellow in 1988. His work is included in many public and private collections throughout the world. Peiser lives and works in Penland, NC where he was named a North Carolina Living Treasure in 2011. RAM currently has 12 works by Peiser in the collection.

COLLECTION FOCUS solo exhibitions organized over the last 14 years at RAM further reflect the museum's commitment to collecting and showing the work of artists in-depth.

The following artists were featured in these RAM exhibitions presented during the dates listed below:

Renie Breskin Adams – June 18 – September 24, 2017

Dorothy Gill Barnes – November 20, 2011 – January 15, 2012

Robert Burkert – October 8, 2017 – February, 4, 2018

Jack Earl – December 21, 2008 – March 8, 2009

Robert W. Ebendorf – February 14 – May 9, 2004

Carol Eckert – October 17, 2010 – February 6, 2011

David Ellsworth – November 20, 2011 – January 15, 2012

Sergei Isupov – February 23 – June 8, 2014

Rosita Johanson – October 21, 2012 – February 3, 2013

Ken Loeber – September 15, 2013 – February 2, 2014

Michael Lucero – October 27, 2014 – January 26, 2015

John McQueen – October 17, 2010 – February 6, 2011

John Wilde – October 6, 2013 – January 12, 2014

Study guides are available in the Museum Store for the exhibitions listed above.

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Other selected solo exhibitions presented at RAM:

Meet Rauschke and Wiken: New Additions to RAM's Wood Collection –

June 4 – September 3, 2006

Toshiko Takaezu: Heaven and Earth – September 6, 2005 – January 8, 2006

Beth Van Hoesen: The Observant Eye – May 20 – September 9, 2012

Ruth Grotenrath and Schomer Lichtner at RAM – January 23 – May 8, 2011

Michael Pry: The Harley Portraits – August 30 – November 30, 2013

Much of What is Seen is Not: Frank Boyden as Printmaker –

February 23 – June 8, 2014

California Dreamin': Mark Adams and Frank Lobdell – February 21 – June 5, 2016

RAM Collects: Wood Letter Openers by Norm Sartorius from Ronald

and Kay Springwater – October 18, 2015 – February 7, 2016

Shie and Acord: Recent Acquisitions – June 18 – September 24, 2017

It's Like Poetry: Building a Toshiko Takaezu Archive at RAM –

August 19, 2019 – July 26, 2020

Other RAM archive exhibitions:

Treasure Trove: Establishing Jewelry and Metals Archives at RAM

January 20 – September 20, 2019

Featured works by the following artists: Dan Adams, Carolyn Morris Bach, Kat Cole, Michael Croft, Ben J. Cunningham, Robert W. Ebendorf, Sandra Enterline, John J. Grant, Arline Fisch, Steven Ford, David Forlano, Else Bates Freund, Terri Gelenian-Wood, Danielle Gori-Montanelli, Tina Fung Holder, Tory Hughes, Ken Loeber, Dona Look, Eleanor Moty, Harold O'Connor, Ivy Ross, Antonia Schwed, Joyce Scott, Kiff Slemmons, Mary Tingley, Cynthia Toops, Pier Voulkos, Elise Winters, and Marci Zelmanoff.