



PRESS RELEASE

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Featured Recent Acquisition

Racine Art Museum Spotlights Annette Corcoran Teapots

Racine, WI February 2, 2016

The Racine Art Museum (RAM) is pleased to debut a grouping of three glazed porcelain sculptures created in the 1990s by Annette Corcoran. RAM is grateful to long-term donors David and Jacqueline Charak, Iris and Jay Leonard, and the Kohler Foundation, Inc. for these three sculptures, which join twelve examples of Corcoran’s works in RAM’s collection. These three pieces, created in the 1990s and recently donated to the museum, demonstrate different aspects of the artist’s work.

Born in Inglewood, California in 1930, Corcoran came to ceramics relatively late in life—at the age of 40—after a career as a commercial artist. She has developed a national reputation for her detailed ceramic sculptures depicting specific breeds of birds. Corcoran creates realistic, slightly abstracted representations of birds whose bodies are also functional teapots. Tapping into our long fascination with this subject matter, these works recall a wide range of high and low art forms of avian figurines from Meissen porcelain, to the products of the Boehm Studios, to knickknacks picked up at discount stores. Although her works usually have the elements of a traditional teapot—body, spout, handle, lid—they function more as sculptural and aesthetic interpretations.

Forming the birds by hand out of porcelain, Corcoran usually does not begin with a preconceived plan, allowing the shape of the form that develops to inspire her design for the completed work. The realistic eyes, feathers, and beaks bring a strong sense of life and personality to her pieces. Her use of successive layers of underglazes, glazes, and china paints create an effective trompe l’oeil (fool the eye) effect. In RAM’s new arrivals, Corcoran treats the bird in subtly different ways, ranging from the body serving as a full-sized teapot to a sculptural grouping in which the teapot is minimized atop a large cat’s head. She even creates a lid in the shape of a bird that perches atop a non-avian teapot body.

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Corcoran received her BA from the University of California at Berkeley in 1952. At the age of 86, she continues to work in her studio. Her work has been featured around the world in solo and group exhibitions. Corcoran's pieces can be found in numerous important private and public collections including the: Honolulu Museum of Art, Hawaii; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Newark Museum, New Jersey; Oakland Museum of California; and Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Exhibitions are made possible in part at Racine Art Museum by Platinum Sponsors – Karen Johnson Boyd and William B. Boyd, SC Johnson, and Windgate Charitable Foundation.

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Together, the two campuses of the Racine Art Museum, RAM in downtown Racine at 441 Main Street and the Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts at 2519 Northwestern Avenue, seek to elevate the stature of contemporary crafts to that of fine art by exhibiting significant works in craft media with painting, sculpture and photography, while providing outstanding educational art programming.

Docent led contemporary craft and architectural tours of the museums are available. Both campuses of the Racine Art Museum, are open Tuesday – Saturday 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, and are closed Mondays, Federal holidays and Easter. RAM is open Sunday Noon – 5:00 pm, while Wustum is closed Sundays. An admission fee of \$5 for adults, with reduced fees for students and seniors, applies at RAM. Admission to Wustum is free. Members are always admitted without charge to either campus.