

https://journaltimes.com/lifestyles/leisure/exhibit-expands-the-breadth-of-contemporary-enamels/article_abfc3ac5-d2bb-551a-9713-95f94580c3e7.html

Exhibit expands the breadth of contemporary enamels

Feb 11, 2019

\$3 FOR 3 MONTHS

Tod Pardon

"Intoopoe" by Tod Pardon is made of sterling silver, enamel, bone, copper, rosewood and steel.

RACINE — With an ever-growing collection, the Racine Art Museum, 441 Main St., is consistently acquiring examples of contemporary jewelry and metal hollowware, incorporating a range of styles and techniques. Open through Oct. 6, “Fusion: Contemporary Enamels from RAM’s Collection” offers a brief survey of the enamel works available in RAM’s holdings.

In the context of objects, enameling is the fusing of fine glass particles and, most often, a metal surface at very high temperatures. Enameling can be used to coat functional items, such as cooking ware, yet it can also be used to embellish and decorate. With its origins centuries ago, enameling offered the means to add color to certain materials and it was reportedly used in place of rare gemstones as needed.

For contemporary jewelry and metalwork, enamel is used to create objects that play into theoretical, aesthetic and practical explorations. Jamie Bennett, for example, expands the possibilities of enamel by challenging expectations. He investigates the “visual and tactile breadth” of the medium through painterly compositions and innovative techniques. Inspired by the human form as well as technology and nature, Katharine Wood was introduced to enameling by her mother, Antonia Schwed, who also created enamel jewelry. RAM has examples from both artists, allowing for a unique opportunity to see the influence of family on creative pursuits. Zachery Lechtenberg draws on his interest in “collectible” culture, and his love of toys to create enamel objects and jewelry populated by cartoon-inspired characters. While he uses enamel to add color to small-scale decorative objects and wearables, Lechtenberg overturns the traditions of the medium by infusing work with his own special brand of humor.

Docent-led contemporary craft and architectural tours of the museum are available.

Racine Art Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$7 for adults, and \$5 for youth ages 12-18, full-time students and seniors 62 and older. There is no charge for children ages 11 and younger.