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Glass archives on exhibit at RAM

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RACINE — "Open Storage: RAM Showcases Glass Archives" will be on exhibit through Aug. 9 at the Racine Art Museum, 441 Main St.

The exhibit features the work of four glass pioneers — Dan Dailey, Michael Glancy, Joel Philip Myers and Mark Peiser — who pushed the medium technically and aesthetically.

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.

Arranged as solo showcases, "RAM Showcases Glass Archives" offers opportunities to compare and contrast individual works by each artist. Featuring almost 40 pieces — mainly sculptural vessels — created between 1977 and 2005, the show offers a snapshot of these individual artist's careers, as well as a glimpse of the over 1,000 contemporary glass works in RAM's collection. As a whole, major figures in contemporary glass such as these artists moved away from function toward using the material to investigate aesthetic, personal, and social and cultural issues — shaping a field that was just starting to unfold in the last half of the 20th century.

Reflecting the very experimental nature of the first decades of exploring glass as an art medium, a variety of techniques are represented — some more traditional and some distinct to these artist's individual working styles. For example, Michael Glancy's innovative process, which involves working with glass in a cold state, involves carving, sandblasting, engraving and electroforming.

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

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