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**Honoring Karen Johnson Boyd
at Racine Art Museum**

Racine, WI April 30, 2018

Beginning this summer, Racine Art Museum (RAM) is dedicating all of RAM's galleries to artwork given by collector Karen Johnson Boyd (1924-2016) to honor her lifelong commitment to supporting the arts. A series of four individually titled exhibitions will highlight her interests and accomplishments, including a partial reprise of a figurative clay show she curated, recognition of her role leading Chicago's Perimeter Gallery, and a focus on artists she admired such as Warrington Colescott, Margaret Ponce Israel, and Ken Loeber.

Karen Johnson Boyd has been the largest single beneficiary to the Racine Art Museum—these exhibitions honor her philanthropy. Over four decades, she gifted a significant number of ceramics, textiles, glass, metals, and works on paper to the museum. In recognition of her core gift of over 1,700 works, RAM's galleries were named in her honor. In 1991 alone, Mrs. Boyd gave over 200 works, grounding the museum's craft focus and setting the stage for RAM to become the holder of America's largest contemporary craft collection.

Mrs. Boyd was an advocate for and a collector of art, especially contemporary American craft and works on paper. Open May 27 – December 20, 2018, **Honoring Karen Johnson Boyd: Collecting In-Depth at Home and at RAM** is organized by categories of fiber art, work from Japan, work from Perimeter Gallery artists, and functional ceramics—all specialty areas of interest for Mrs. Boyd. This exhibition also contains work that is at RAM because of her influence and legacy. Her establishment of Perimeter Gallery in Chicago in 1982, with its emphasis on a broad range of artists, and her consistent patronage of visual art in other ways made Mrs. Boyd a distinguished—albeit quiet—major collector. The works gathered, including multiple examples by individual artists, reflect her desire to collect in-depth across disciplines

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and support artists' development over a period of time while documenting their careers.

In some ways, Mrs. Boyd was revolutionary. Her trademark style—in terms of the type of work she collected and how she displayed it—was to blend all media together. Open June 24 – February 3, 2019, ***Honoring Karen Johnson Boyd: A Multi-Dimensional Approach*** echoes both Mrs. Boyd's and RAM's approach to juxtaposing images and objects, featuring both two-dimensional and three-dimensional works in a variety of media. Mrs. Boyd supported artists working in craft media as well as those in photography, drawing, collage, painting, and printmaking. She collected contemporary printmakers in-depth, like noted Wisconsinites Warrington Colescott and Frances Myers, in addition to famed Madison-based painter and draftsman, John Wilde.

Mrs. Boyd did not just collect art, she wore it. Her notice of and appreciation for contemporary art jewelry is explored in this exhibition with over 50 pieces by acclaimed makers donated to RAM over the years. Open June 24 – February 3, 2019, ***Honoring Karen Johnson Boyd: Art Jewelry/Sculpture to Wear*** includes brooches, neckpieces, and earrings made of both precious and non-precious materials. Mrs. Boyd's gifts to RAM include an enamel and mother-of-pearl necklace and earring set by landmark jeweler, Earl Pardon; glass bead neckpieces by recent MacArthur Grant award winner Joyce Scott; and a colorful acrylic brooch by British jeweler, Peter Chang.

Open July 1 – January 20, 2019, ***Honoring Karen Johnson Boyd: Contemporary Clay*** takes a focused look at one of her most long-lived loves: works made of clay. The medium became a primary emphasis of her collecting pursuits over the years. She affirmed: "Clay always seemed like the basic material to me. It's so responsive. And once I took a ceramics class and we really got in there with clay, I just started feeling good about things people made with their hands." This show offers a dual perspective for understanding Mrs. Boyd's interest in contemporary ceramics. Large portions of *The Nude in Clay* and *The Nude in Clay II*—two exhibitions she curated for Perimeter Gallery in the 1990s that traveled to RAM's Wustum Museum—are assembled. Mrs. Boyd chose artists who blended ancient and modern sources; emphasized form, structure, and surface; and considered historical, social, and cultural attitudes about the human body.

Exhibitions at Racine Art Museum are made possible by: Platinum Sponsor - Friends of Fiber Art International and Windgate Charitable Foundation; Diamond Sponsor - Osborne and Scekcic Family Foundation; Gold Sponsors - Herzfeld Foundation, Johnson Bank, W.T.

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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 \$7 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.