

Racine, WI October 17, 2013

## RAM Presents In-Depth: Rosita Johanson

Open October 21, 2013 through February 3, 2013, the Racine Art Museum (RAM) exhibition **Collection Focus: Rosita Johanson** offers an in-depth experience of the work of late Canadian artist Rosita Johanson (1937-2007). A dressmaker by trade, fiber artist Johanson applied her natural ability of working with thread and fabric to creating colorful, embroidered narratives full of people, animals, and activity. This Collections Focus series solo exhibition at the Racine Art Museum offers 20 works created in the 1990s and early 2000s that together form an archive of Johanson's working methods and her subject matter over a prolonged period of time.



**Rosita Johanson**, *Dreams, Dreams*, 1995

Dyed cotton fabric, dyed cotton thread, metallic thread and acrylic paint  
Racine Art Museum, Gift of Mobilia Gallery, Cambridge, MA  
Photography: Jon Bolton, Racine, WI

Drawing on childhood memories, her imagination, and stories her father told her, as well as some topical political and social issues, Johanson would piece together compositions using appliqué, machine embroidery, and hand-stitching. Her small scale designs (sizes range from 3

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x 4 to 8 x 8 inches), which often began as sketches, culminated in layers of thread and fabric.

As an artist, Johanson was largely self-taught-she learned many of her methods of working from a lifetime of being near people interested in fiber and thread, and through her own investigations as an adult. She had two primary methods for executing her compositions-a combination of hand and machine stitching or punch needle embroidery (also known as loop pile embroidery), which creates a surface similar to a miniature pile carpet. In addition, her textiles exhibit a strong interest in visual collage as she combined fabric with fiber and found object elements.

Johanson began presenting her work in professional venues in the mid-1980s. From 1984 through 1994 she regularly participated in outdoor art exhibitions in Toronto. However, it was her inclusion in the *6th* and *7th International Biennale of Miniature Textiles* in Hungary (1986 and 1988) that led to important international recognition of her work, including representation by Mobilia Gallery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In addition to the Racine Art Museum, Johanson's works are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Jean Lurçat Museum in Angers, France.

A collection study guide is available, free to RAM members and with paid museum admission. The guide features an essay on the significance of the Johanson's work along with color images of her pieces within RAM's permanent collection. The 20-page guides are also available for \$5 plus shipping by calling the RAM Museum Store at 262.638.8200.

This exhibition is made possible by: Presenting Sponsors - Karen Johnson Boyd and William B. Boyd, Emile H. Mathis II Estate, in Memory of his Parents: Emil H. and Anna T. Mathis, RAM Society Members, S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., Windgate Charitable Foundation; Gold Sponsor - Racine United Arts Fund; Silver Sponsors - Elwood Corporation, Osborne and Scekcic Family Foundation, Racine Community Foundation, W.T. Walker Group, Inc., Wisconsin Arts Board; Bronze Sponsors - The A.C. Buhler Family, Camille and Alex Cook, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, CNH America LLC, E.C. Styberg Foundation, Educators Credit Union, In Sink Erator, Knight-Barry Title, Inc., Marcia and Alan Docter Endowment Fund, The Marjorie L. Christiansen Foundation, The Norbel Foundation, Real Racine, Runzheimer Foundation, Wisconsin Public Radio.

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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 to the public

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.

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