



PRESS RELEASE

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**Racine Art Museum Debuts
New Polish Fiber Art Gifts**

Racine, WI October 16, 2015

Poland experienced a dramatic shift in the late twentieth century as it transformed from a communist regime to a democracy. Living in a country that was experiencing intense social and political change, artists were self-consciously making work that reflected personal interests and that expanded upon—or deviated from—more traditional modes of working. Open October 18, 2015 – February 7, 2016, **RAM Collects: Contemporary Polish Fiber Art from Camille and Alex Cook** celebrates over 25 works from Polish artists gifted to the collection by longtime supporters of Racine Art Museum.

Challenged with material limitations, Polish fiber artists embraced the possibilities of atypical media, innovative techniques, and/or compelling content. Traditional processes, such as weaving or knotting, served as the groundwork for experimentation. Artists felt free to explore abstract concepts while playing with material properties and dynamic compositions.

Since the 1970s, Łódź, Poland—the historical site of a significant textile industry—has been the home for a triennial exhibition of fiber-related work by almost 150 artists from over 50 countries. This survey of innovative fiber from across the globe significantly impacts the artists of the host country, as well as those further afield.

Nuanced in different ways and affected by various cultural changes, fiber art produced over the last 50 years has reflected artists' interests in exploring the limits of materials, challenging technique and construction, reflecting social and personal issues, and expanding the definition of what fiber art means today.

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Included in the gift are Grazyna Brylewska-Pedzialek, Maria Teresa Chojnacka, Barbara Galan, Lilla Kulka, Andrzej Rajch, and Jolanta Rudzka-Habisiak.

RAM Collects: Contemporary Polish Fiber Art from Camille and Alex Cook is made possible at Racine Art Museum by: Platinum Sponsors - Karen Johnson Boyd and William B. Boyd, SC Johnson, Windgate Charitable Foundation; Gold Sponsors - Herzfeld Foundation, Johnson Bank, National Endowment for the Arts, Osborne and Scekcic Family Foundation, Racine Community Foundation, W.T. Walker Group, Inc.; Silver Sponsors - Racine County, Real Racine, Wisconsin Arts Board; Bronze Sponsors - EC Styberg Foundation, Educators Credit Union, In Sink Erator, The Norbell Foundation, Orkney Springs Retreat, Polyform Products, Inc., Rasmussen Diamonds, Ruud Family Foundation, Inc., and 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. 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.