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Racine Art Museum Shines this Summer

Racine, WI June 7, 2016

Why do things that shine appeal to so many people? Scientific studies shared in early 2014 link that attraction to innate characteristics of human beings, including critical connections to sunlight and water. Open June 19, 2016 - October 2, 2016, **Precious Metals: Shining Examples from RAM's Collection** is an exhibition that plays with the concept of preciousness and how we assign value to objects.

Culturally and socially, a shiny surface also seems to suggest something luxurious or to be treasured. Linked to this, the so-called "precious metals" —generally, gold, silver, and varieties of platinum—are historically associated with being rare, naturally occurring, lustrous, and of high economic value.

Mainly comprised of shiny artworks made of precious metals, the exhibition also features shiny artworks of other materials and other metals—a comparison that draws attention to choices artists make about using one media over another. Whether referencing historical traditions, exploring ideas about culture and society, responding to the physical properties of metals, or experimenting with texture and color, contemporary artists consider the implications of their chosen materials in terms of what they want to convey.

Drawing directly from RAM's holdings, *Precious Metals* features a wide variety of work including many examples of jewelry, hollowware, and vessels either made of or adorned with something "lustrous." Artists included in the exhibition may be familiar to RAM guests—Matt Eskuche, Arline Fisch, John Garrett, Mary Giles, Tory Hughes, Myra Mimplitsch-Gray, Kevin O'Dwyer, Adrian Saxe, and Beatrice Wood. There are also new works, such as prints accented with gold leaf by Reika Iwami and hollowware and jewelry by respected UW-Milwaukee metals professor and artist Mary Tingley who passed away in 2000. Other Wisconsin-based artists featured include Donald Friedlich,

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Lisa Gralnick, Hai-chi Jihn, and Ken Loeber.

Racine Art Museum Goes "Glam"

Coinciding with Precious Metals is the exhibition Go for Baroque: Opulence and Excess in Contemporary Art open through September 4, 2016. Baroque is one of those words whose meaning changes slightly depending on context and perspective- it could refer to a specific or general time period or to a style of art, architecture, music, or other creative endeavor. Both exhibitions feature the work by artists who explore the decorative and excessive as well as things that gleam and shine.

Precious Metals: Shining Examples from RAM's Collection is made possible at Racine Art Museum by: Platinum Sponsors - Karen Johnson Boyd and William B. Boyd, SC Johnson, Windgate Charitable Foundation; Diamond Sponsor - Osborne and Scekcic Family Foundation; Gold Sponsors - Herzfeld Foundation, Johnson Bank, National Endowment for the Arts, Racine Community Foundation, W. T. Walker Group, Inc.; Silver Sponsors - Real Racine, Wisconsin Arts Board; Bronze Sponsors - Burlington Graphic Systems, Inc., EC Styberg Foundation, Educators Credit Union, In Sink Erator, The Norbell Foundation, Orkney Springs Retreat, Rasmussen Diamonds, Ruud Family Foundation, Inc.

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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 \$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.