



PRESS RELEASE

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**Standing on Ceremony  
Racine Art Museum Showcases Functional Ware**

Racine, WI October 15, 2015

Objects that are connected to rituals—and therefore connected to social and cultural traditions—have a symbolic or metaphoric significance as well as a practical function. Open October 18, 2015 through February 7, 2016, **Standing on Ceremony** at Racine Art Museum highlights functional artworks from the museum's collection that could be used for everyday rituals such as drinking and eating. Ceramic tea services and metal serving ware offer opportunities to reflect on the marriage of form and function in contemporary crafts.

The teapot can be a container for liquid, but it could also be considered a vessel for communication and a symbol of interpersonal relationships as well as historic events. As part of a ritual, this object is held in human hands yet it can also be “understood” without being touched. The teapot may be viewed in combination with other functional pieces, such as a cup and saucer. These tea sets imply further use and activity. As such, the teapot is a rather mundane object that can still possess power.

In addition, this exhibition features goblets, vessels, jewelry, and non-functional works that allow a broader view of the concepts of ceremony and ritual. Self-consciously, contemporary artists sometimes choose to investigate the relationship between power, spirituality, and objects. They reference a broad range of sources—African rituals, Native American ceremonies, and Western religious traditions—as they create works that reverently speak to the desire to imbue materials and items with extraordinary meaning. The work references ritual objects even if they are no longer meant to be used in the same way.

*Standing on Ceremony: Functional Ware from RAM's Collection* is made possible at

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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 Scekic 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.