



## **Component Parts: Artworks Made of Multiple Elements**

June 2, 2021 – February 12, 2022

Artworks made of multiple elements are not new to the modern era but contemporary artists have pushed their direction and visual potential. Through conceptual, metaphorical, and experimental lenses, artists literally make one object, or one ultimate work, out of many pieces. **Component Parts** features a wide range of media and approaches—both two and three-dimensional—that expand this conversation.

Sculptural configurations made of individual pieces can register as single objects with layers of information. Examples include Beth Lipman's *Still Life with Detritus*, a sublime re-imagining in glass and wood of a historical still-life including the table it rests upon, and Eddie Dominguez's ceramic *Fish Dinner*, a wall-mounted relief that cleverly uses underwater life-themed dinnerware to evoke an aquarium. Whereas Nancy Hild's painting group, *Allegory of the Seven Sins*, could be understood as seven individual pieces, its narrative is most powerful when all of the paintings are considered in relation to one another. This part-to-whole idea is further underscored with print portfolios by individual artists—where one or two pieces could stand in for the whole but a different message is conveyed when larger numbers of works are viewed together at once.

Drawn from RAM's collection, the works in this exhibition are united by conceptual choices in presentation yet they reflect a variety of perspectives and subject matter—from cultural, historical, and domestic issues to material and formal investigations.

Artists whose works are featured include: Susan Baker, Donald Celender, David Chatt, Christine Clark, Tara K. Daly, Robert L. Dancik, Stephen Dixon, Eddie Dominguez, Matt Eskuche, David Gilhooly, Caroline Gore, Keiko Hara, Caren Heft, Nancy Hild, Margaret Ponce Israel, Les Levine, Beth Lipman, Thomas Mann, Karen Theusen Massaro, Rebecca Medel, Megumi Naitoh, Tina Rath, Adolph Rosenblatt, Nancy Schaefer, Cindy Sherman, Lorna Simpson, Kiff Slemmons, Barbara Lee Smith, Therman Statom, Mary Baylies Willey, and Elenor Wilson. Due to the light-sensitive nature of some materials used, not all works/artists are included during the entire run of the exhibition.

### **Biographies and statements from select featured artists**

**Eddie Dominguez** was born in 1957 in Tucumcari, New Mexico. He is considered a leading figure in contemporary American ceramics, although that is just one of many materials he uses. While his work may sometimes play on notions and objects associated with the domestic, such as dinnerware, Dominguez primarily uses his work to explore the landscape as well as cultural and social issues including ethnicity, political tensions, and

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gender. His pieces are heavily influenced by his childhood in New Mexico with its Native American and Spanish colonial past. These influences may show up in his work directly or indirectly alongside other subjects like twentieth-century painting, Asian, African, and Pre-Columbian art, and historical ceramics. Despite having significant training working with clay, Dominguez is not dependent on one medium. It is not uncommon for him to use other materials such as, metal, glass, concrete, and paper. Dominguez views each of his pieces as part of a collective story that illustrates life, art, and himself. As he states: "It is rare that I make objects such as single plates or cups that can stand on their own. It's just not a focus. I think of my work as all part of the same substance. It is like confetti. There may be different sizes and colors, but it is all torn paper."

Dominguez received a BFA from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 1981 and an MFA from New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in 1983. Currently, he is a professor of ceramics in the Department of Art, Art History, and Design at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. His work is in numerous collections such as: Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, Ohio; Cooper-Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, New York, New York; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Dominguez has lectured and led workshops at leading institutions such as: Tamarind Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, Maine; and Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island.

Born in the 1940s, **Nancy Hild** (1948 – 2017) spent most of her artistic career in Chicago where she had over 70 exhibitions during her lifetime. Her work has been shown internationally in countries such as the United Kingdom, South America, China, and Mexico. Hild spent the later part of her life in Mexico, first in Juchitan and later in Oaxaca City. Her favorite subjects included a smoking hand, animals, and nostalgia-evoking objects such as polka-dotted gloves and cow fabric. Her works showcase theoretical connections between women's equality and animal rights. Hild was an advocate for the humane treatment of animals—specifically for domestic poultry. The guardian of Hild's work, **Linda James**, describes her work as, "...complex, vibrant and masterful in technical facility. They show a coalescence of consistent elements, markers of a career in painting that ultimately display a clear, unique, and individual vision." Hild often claimed that she would work until her last days. She fulfilled this statement in 2017 when she attended her solo show at Espacio Copal in Oaxaca City, and passed away a few short weeks later.

**Keiko Hara** was born in Korea in 1942, and was raised in both Japan and China. She began her college education in Japan, ultimately receiving a BFA in painting from Mississippi State University for Women in Columbus, Mississippi, in 1974. Subsequently, she obtained an MA in printmaking at the University of Wisconsin-

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Milwaukee as well as an MFA in printmaking at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Hara is a multidisciplinary artist—particularly known for her printmaking proficiency. She is considered an authority on mokuhanga—Japanese woodblock printing. Hara creates abstract compositions with vibrant and intense colors. Her pieces symbolize the tactility of objects and their connection to nature as well as how people perceive, feel, and conceive the universe. Hara has had solo exhibitions at a multitude of institutions, including the Art Collective, Walla Walla, Washington; Sammamish City Hall Gallery, Sammamish, Washington; and Foundry Vineyards Gallery, Walla Walla, Washington. She has received numerous honors including an artist residency at the Pilchuck Glass Summer Program, Stanwood, Washington; and a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant.

Born in Pennsylvania in 1971, **Beth Lipman** now lives in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin. She is renowned for sculptural compositions that depict the bounty and luxury of Renaissance and Baroque still-life paintings, specifically those created in the Netherlands during the seventeenth century. Her sculptures, usually but not exclusively comprised of clear glass, tackle subjects such as mortality, materiality, and temporality. In order to draw attention to the fragile nature of existence, Lipman incorporates broken elements, such as a fractured goblet with bits strewn on the floor. She is also known for site specific installations that interact with elements of the space—from its history and individuals involved in shaping that past to its architectural details. She earned a BFA from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1994. Throughout her artistic career, Lipman has had several artist residencies including the Studio at the Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, New York; the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin; and the Museum of Glass, Tacoma, Washington. She has received numerous awards including a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, a Virginia Groot Foundation Grant, and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant. Lipman's work has been shown nationally and internationally at institutions such as the Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida; Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Gustavsbers Konsthall, Gustavsberg, Sweden. Her work is in the permanent collection of many museums such as the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, North Carolina; Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, New York; and the Jewish Museum, New York, New York.

Ceramic artist **Adolph Rosenblatt** was born in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1933. He spent most of his adult life living in Milwaukee where he ultimately passed away in 2017. Rosenblatt studied at Yale School of Art and Architecture with **Josef Albers**—recognized for his contributions to color theory—as his mentor. During Rosenblatt's career he was shown in more than 50 group and 30 solo exhibitions. Best known for his painted ceramic figures that portray daily life, Rosenblatt began his artistic career as a painter. As the layers of paint in his work became thicker and thicker, he made a relatively easy transition to creating three-dimensional work. Striving for a direct and personal approach,

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Rosenblatt worked directly with his subjects—sculpting and documenting them in real time, either in his studio or wherever they were most comfortable. This technique resulted in pieces that were densely rich with intimate details. Rosenblatt's pieces can be found in private and public collections, including the Library of Congress in Washington, DC; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York; and the Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He received many awards and honors including the Wisconsin Visual Art Achievement Award.

**Lorna Simpson** lives and works in Brooklyn, New York, where she was born in 1960. Simpson earned a BFA in photography from the School of Visual Arts, New York, New York, and an MFA from the University of California, San Diego. By the time she graduated from her masters program, Simpson was already considered a pioneer. Her initial body of work helped start a significant shift in the perception of photography as art—as a medium that can be transient and malleable. Her large-scale images confront the narrow, conventional views people had (and still have) on gender, identity, culture, history, and memory. Her most iconic works were captured during the 1980s. These pieces depict African-American figures seen only from behind, or in fragments, often with single words or short phrases below the images.

The piece currently on display in **Component Parts** is an example of how Simpson articulates her ideas through a sculptural, rather than photographic, form. Entitled, *III*, the work is a wooden box containing three wishbones made of ceramic, rubber, and bronze set inside felt lining. A separate card shows a drawing of a wishbone with text that reads, "Wish #1, Wish #2, Wish #3." Simpson's tendency to use text to build a narrative is here applied to an object rather than an image. She suggests an action—instead of a definitive story—that someone can make three wishes with three wishbones. This open-endedness allows for various interpretations and a sense of ambiguity—two elements that Simpson has purposefully employed in her works throughout her career. Simpson has received numerous awards including the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant in 1991, and the International Center of Photography's Infinity Award in 2010. Her work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois; the Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland.

Sculptor, glass artist, and painter **Therman Statom** is known for his life-size glass ladders, chairs, tables, box-like paintings, and small-scale houses. His works are assemblages built from industrial window glass panes, that he sandblasts and paints with vibrant colors, as well as found components. Statom was born in Winter Haven, Florida, in 1953, and spent most of his childhood in Washington, DC. Statom became enamored with

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the spontaneity of glassblowing and its expansive possibilities for experimentation. He went on to pursue his studies at Pilchuck Glass School during its inaugural year of 1971. In 1974, Statom completed a BFA at Rhode Island School of Design, and later studied at the Pratt Institute of Art and Design, Brooklyn, New York. During the latter half of his career, Statom has shifted his focus to the importance of educational programming within the arts. He employs workshops as a catalyst for social change within a community. Statom's work is featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions annually, both in US and international venues. Throughout his career, he has completed over 30 large, site-specific installations like that at the Orlando Museum of Art in Florida. His work can be found in museum collections throughout the US, including: the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan; the Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio; and the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia, as well as many others.

Born in 1980, **Elenor Wilson** is a ceramic sculptor that has exhibited nationally and internationally. She received a BFA from Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and an MFA from the State University of New York at New Paltz. Wilson worked as the editor and executive director of semi-annual ceramics journal and independent nonprofit, **Studio Potter** from 2014 to 2019. Currently, Wilson works as a project manager at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her works in clay take on varied forms including slip cast, modular, large-scale sculpture, and functional pottery. Wilson states, "I see each new expression in clay as a way to engage with my community locally and globally; a vehicle for sharing and celebrating history, heritage, and contemporary culture." As an artist, Wilson has traveled extensively, and has had multiple artist residencies including Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass Village, Colorado; Wu Xing Design Company Limited, Danshui District, New Taipei City, Taiwan; and New Taipei City Yingge Ceramics Museum, Yingge District, New Taipei City, Taiwan, among others. She has exhibited pieces nationally and internationally, including at the Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; the Clay Studio of Missoula, Montana; and Wu Xing Design Studio, Danshui Public Library Gallery, Danshui District, New Taipei City, Taiwan.

## Artists of Color

RAM is committed to supporting diverse voices—whether that diversity reflects race, gender, sexuality, age, ability, social standing, or world perspective.

In this moment in time, it is critical that spotlights are placed on voices that have been historically underrepresented, at RAM that begins with women and artists of color. Artists of color are identified in this context as non-white and non-European in heritage. This simplification—which is arguably a flawed starting point—does not account for the nuances and variations of society. It is a beginning—a way to direct those who want

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to educate themselves about what is possible when new perspectives are discovered. Modifications to this approach are expected as RAM learns and grows.

Further, as an educational institution rooted in the humanities and using art as a catalyst, RAM wants to encourage inquiry and exploration about the world in which we live. RAM hopes spotlighting artists of color spurs further engagement with these artists and their ideas. The following is a list of artists of color whose works are included in this exhibition. Because of the light-sensitive nature of some of the materials used, not all works/artists are featured during the entire exhibition. Visitors are encouraged to take note and research these artists via the internet to find out more about their biographies and larger bodies of work.

Eddie Dominguez  
Keiko Hara  
Margaret Ponce Israel  
Megumi Naitoh  
Lorna Simpson  
Therman Statom

## **Women Artists at RAM**

RAM acknowledges the efforts of self-identifying women in the art world consistently and sincerely at all times. The museum highlights how women are inextricably woven—and often the foundation—of creative endeavors and discourse. By current count, 41% of the artists in RAM's collection are women. This percentage—which is consistently increasing—is already substantially greater than the ratios calculated at other organizations with permanent collections and active exhibition programs. At RAM, work made by different genders is considered for inclusion in the museum's holdings on equal terms. And notably, because RAM relies on gifts of artwork to build the collection, this policy has been reinforced by open-minded donors who have collected, and then donated, quality work regardless of the gender of the artist.

The following is a list of women whose works are included in this exhibition. Because of the light-sensitive nature of some of the materials used, not all works/artists are featured during the entire exhibition. Visitors are encouraged to take note and research these artists via the internet to find out more about their biographies and larger bodies of work. This effort—similar to efforts to highlight artists of color at RAM—is not meant to single out artists to stigmatize them but to magnify and cast a spotlight on their significance. It reflects intention, goodwill, and an attempt to reckon with years of historical underrepresentation. RAM hopes this provides opportunities for audiences to learn more about these artists and their ideas.



Susan Baker  
Christine Clark  
Tara Daly  
Caroline Gore  
Keiko Hara  
Caren Heft  
Nancy Hild  
Margaret Ponce Israel  
Beth Lipman  
Karen Theusen Massaro  
Rebecca Medel  
Megumi Naitoh  
Tina Rath  
Nancy Schaefer  
Cindy Sherman  
Lorna Simpson  
Kiff Slemmons  
Barbara Lee Smith  
Mary Willey  
Elenor Wilson