

RAM Showcase: Four Jewelers and the Artists of Color Acquisition Fund

Utilizing rich and varied materials like sea grass, silicone, recycled keychains, and bronze, the contemporary artists featured in this exhibition create evocative and poetic adornments. Each artist undertakes investigations linking media, conceptual threads, and notions of wearability. Their jewelry is not just used as an object but also as a way to investigate the world—exploring topics like organic growth; personal, cultural, and social history; pop culture; and heritage. What further connects the featured work is that every piece is new to RAM as part of the first round of acquisitions specifically focused on supporting artists of color. These additions reflect RAM's desire to further broaden the scope of creative voices that comprise the museum's permanent collection.

Dedicated funds for acquisitions are not typical for RAM since the institution primarily relies on gifts of artwork. The museum combined a recent grant focused on acquiring works in craft media with an objective to increase historically underrepresented artists in the largest contemporary craft collection in North America—a status RAM has maintained for almost a decade. The funding allowed RAM to acquire the work of seven artists of color in late 2022—most of which were purchased directly from the artists themselves.

Part of the recently formed *RAM Showcase* exhibition series, this first show to focus solely on new artists of color in the collection features the work of **Lorena Angulo**, **Tanya Crane**, **Seulgi Kwon**, and **Georgina Treviño**.

Since I can remember, art has been a strong influence in my life. I come from Mexico, a country so rich in traditions, culture, and art; everything that surrounded me when I was a child living in Mexico has been very important in my formation as an artist.

I was fortunate to travel and live in many states in my country which gave me the exposure to so many different art forms and traditions. This great passion for my culture motivated me to take my first class in metals at SSA [Southwest School of Art] in San Antonio, Texas. I had so many ideas in my heart that needed to come to life and jewelry-making allowed me to do that.



Born and raised in Mexico, **Lorena Angulo** responds to her Mexican heritage in her artwork. Angulo is influenced by what she identifies as traditional Mexican folk art as well as a desire to create compelling objects that tell stories and keep viewers engaged. Appreciating the potential and flexibility of metal clay—a versatile material that can be manipulated and fired like clay but also comprised of and looking like metal—Angulo utilizes it to create most of her work. Currently, she is an adjunct faculty member in the Metals Department at Southwest School of Art. Her work is exhibited nationally and internationally and is featured in numerous books, magazines, and articles. Angulo is also the author of *Behind the Brooch*, published in 2014 by Schiffer Publishing.

Explore:
<http://lorenaangulo.com>



Lorena Angulo
Milagro Heart Tree of Life, 2022
Bronze, coral and turquoise beads,
brass wire, and stainless steel wire
4 7/8 x 3 7/8 x 3/4 inches
Racine Art Museum, Windgate Foundation
Contemporary Craft Acquisition Grant
Photography: Jon Bolton



New England...has recently posited itself as a grand signifier in my existence as a jewelry artist. It is learning about New England's seminal history as the seat of the American Industrial Revolution, the undeniable gravity to the founding of this nation, its growth and ultimate dissolution, and the remnants and detritus that are informing my current work. My formative years were spent in southern California where cultural imprints positioned me in a liminal existence between prejudice and privilege. I am half Black and half White. Living in a middle-class suburb of Los Angeles and visiting my father in socio-economically and racially divided South Central Los Angeles impacted my identity as a young person searching for which culture to occupy and how. Ultimately, I realized the choice itself provided me with a tool of social leverage.



Tanya Crane's artwork metaphorically embodies the many layers of human existence—specifically, history, race, class, and culture. Coming from the perspective of an African American woman, Crane uses community and inclusiveness as a magnetic beacon to diversify and expand ideas, understandings, and codifications.

Currently a Professor of the Practice in Metals at the School Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts, Crane received her MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and her BFA from the State University of New York at New Paltz. She was a 2018 Society of North American Goldsmiths Emerging Artist and the first recipient of the Doris Prouty Foundation Grant for BIPOC/AAPL women in 2021. In addition to being part of RAM's collection, her work is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Stewart Program for Modern Design in Montreal, Canada; and the National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis, Tennessee.

Explore:

<https://tanyamoniquejewelry.com>

Tanya Crane

Pangea, 2014

Copper, nu gold, sterling silver, and sea grass

20 1/2 x 12 x 1 1/2 inches

Racine Art Museum, Windgate Foundation

Contemporary Craft Acquisition Grant

Photography: Jon Bolton



As an inspirational source for art, nature provides infinite possibilities. Artists have studied representations of nature, both past and present, to gain further insight and understanding. For example, historical representations of natural objects were dependent on what could be understood with the naked eye and close observation but technological advances have progressed to microscopic investigation. This, along with the development of natural science as a study, has led to new ways of seeing nature, and consequently, bold new perspectives about the natural world.

I am drawn to cellular growth and change. Cellular organisms generally follow certain "rules" of nature such as order and harmony. As a cell cycles through stages of creation, growth, division, and extinction, changes can be observed and yet, unpredictable and fantastical elements are still possible. Analyzing cellular form and shape, I create new organisms. Inspired by consistently changing structures and mysterious colors, I use silicone for its materiality, texture, and transparency. This synthetic resin can suggest something organic while also being appealing to both wearer and viewer.

South Korean artist **Seulgi Kwon** uses silicone, thread, pigment, and paper to create works that mimic the translucency of glass. Kwon has a BFA, MFA, and PhD from Kookmin University, Seoul, South Korea. Her work has been exhibited internationally and is featured in the collections of numerous institutions, including RAM; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Seoul Museum of Craft Art, South Korea; and Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England. She has been recognized with numerous awards and prizes, including the BKV Prize and an Art Jewelry Forum Award.

Explore:
<https://kwonseulgi.com>



Seulgi Kwon
Autumn Rains, 2018
 Silicone, pigment, thread, plastic, and fabric
 9 x 5 1/4 x 3 1/2 inches
 Racine Art Museum, Windgate Foundation
 Contemporary Craft Acquisition Grant
 Photography: Myoung-wook Huh

Everything can be translated into jewelry. Everything has some jewelry language in it... I'm super into fashion. I'm a hoarder of clothes in general—vintage and accessories... From collecting these metal purses, I got the idea that I wanted to make my own: sculptures that were wearable but could still exist as fashion objects. I started repurposing purses and adding different elements, just like having fun with it.

All of my jewelry is an extension of myself and my thoughts. I'm very attracted to typography from Mexico, the kind that can be found on tortillerias or little shops that I see on the street. There are lots of tacky elements. In a way, I'm highlighting the designs that I see in Mexico, especially the ones that some people look at and are like, "Oh, that's ugly." But I see the beauty in that. I think it's so beautiful.



Georgina Treviño is a contemporary artist and jeweler from Tijuana, Mexico, based in San Diego, California. Treviño's work intersects fashion and art jewelry—reflecting her interest in lowbrow pop culture and 1980s punk rock, as well as her roots in both Mexico and the United States. Treviño earned a BA from San Diego State University. Her work has been part of several national and international exhibitions, and she is represented at RAM and in the collection of the Museum of Arts and Design, New York. She has been featured in numerous publications, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Elle*, *Vogue*, *Allure*, and *Playboy*. Treviño has worked directly with celebrities such as Beyoncé, Lady Gaga, Bad Bunny, Lizzo, and Doja Cat, as well as corporations, including Nike, Bimba y Lola, Fenty, and Spotify.

Explore: <https://georginatrevinojewelry.com>



Exhibition organized
at RAM by Lena Vigna,
Curator of Exhibitions

Georgina Treviño
Sacred Purse, 2021
Found keychains and found vintage purse
16 3/4 x 9 1/2 x 3 1/2 inches
Racine Art Museum, Windgate Foundation
Contemporary Craft Acquisition Grant
Photography: Jon Bolton

Portrait photography courtesy of the artists

R|A|M²⁰

Racine Art Museum
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ramart.org