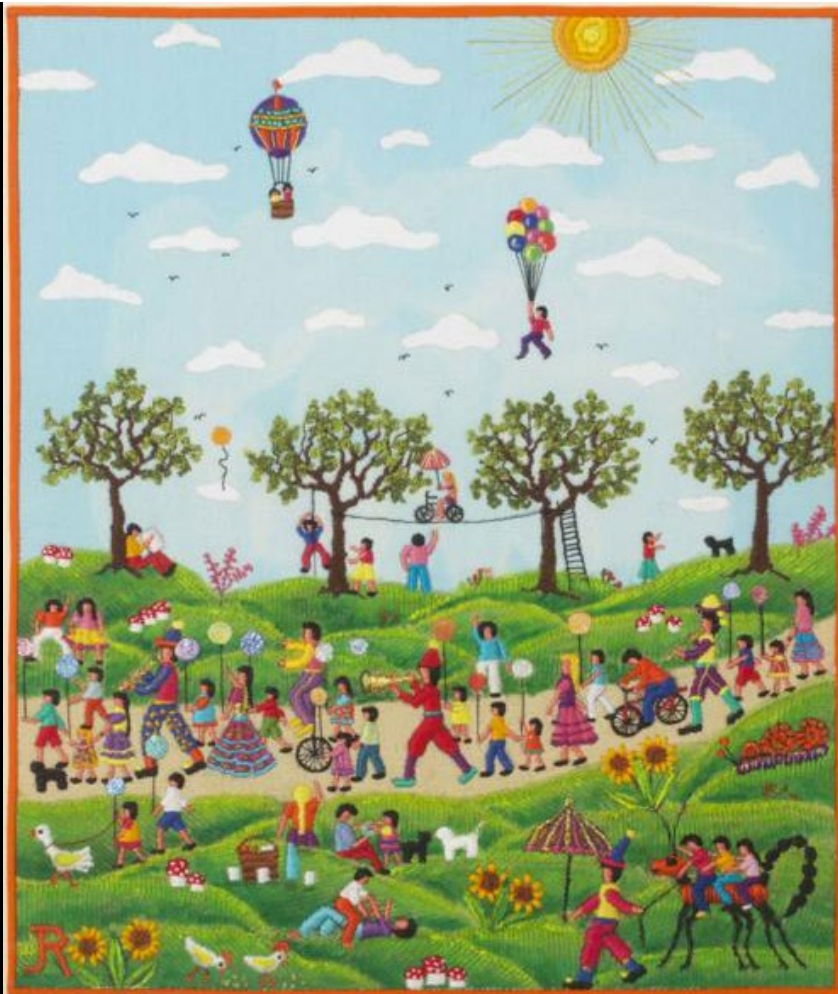


Needlework exhibit on view at RAM

From the [Things to do in and around Racine County](#) series

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"Everybody Loves a Parade," by Rosita Johanson, was made with dyed cotton, dyed cotton thread, metallic thread and acrylic paint. It's part of a needlework exhibit running Sept. 23 to Feb. 13 at the Racine Art Museum.


SUBMITTED PHOTO

RACINE — The Racine Art Museum, 441 Main St., is showcasing a needlework exhibit called In "Stitches: Contemporary Approaches to Needlework" through Feb. 13, featuring work from the museum's permanent collection

that demonstrates contemporary methods of working with materials such as fabric, thread, yarn and embroidery floss through the use of needles, hooks or hands.

For some, needlework and other fiber-related techniques are pastimes, while for others they are used for professions. For still more, these practices are employed to depict ideas. The contemporary artists whose works are included in this exhibition prioritize these processes and use handcraft techniques like embroidery, sewing, crocheting and quilting to explore a wide range of subjects. They investigate labor, gender, memory, history and popular culture as well as personal or social issues.

While there are complex and layered histories associated with various techniques, in the hands of makers styles and processes are sometimes blended. Rather than employing one technique, an artist like Renie Breskin Adams could embroider, crochet, latch hook or knot — or utilize all of them individually or in combination.



Similarly, contemporary quilt-makers such as Joan Schulze might combine stitching with painting, image-transfer and collage. Also, some artists have chosen to break down dimensional boundaries, using techniques routinely associated with two-dimensions to create or embellish three-dimensional forms.

Diverse examples shown next to one another offer opportunities for comparison and contrast. Large-scale quilts using found linens are shown alongside small-scale photo-realistic embroideries, crocheted earrings and stitched baskets.

Regardless of form, these works reflect how handcraft traditions can be incorporated — and expanded upon — to make creative, aesthetic, thoughtful, symbolic or practical statements.

Works on loan from Milwaukee area artists Sharon Kerry-Harlan and Rosemary Ollison expand this conversation even further. Incorporating African influences, Kerry-Harlan uses textiles, as well as other media, to explore the potential metaphors and meanings of the human face and figure. Ollison collects glass, leather, bracelets, beads, bones and jewelry to incorporate into all manner of works, including quilts.