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AND THE GODS OF LOVE



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Racine Art Museum presents In-Depth: Rosita Johanson



Rosita Johanson, *Garden of Eden*, ca. 1990-1995. Dyed cotton fabric, dyed cotton thread, metallic thread and acrylic paint. Racine Art Museum, Gift of Mobilia Gallery, Cambridge, MA. Photo: Jon Bolton, Racine, WI.



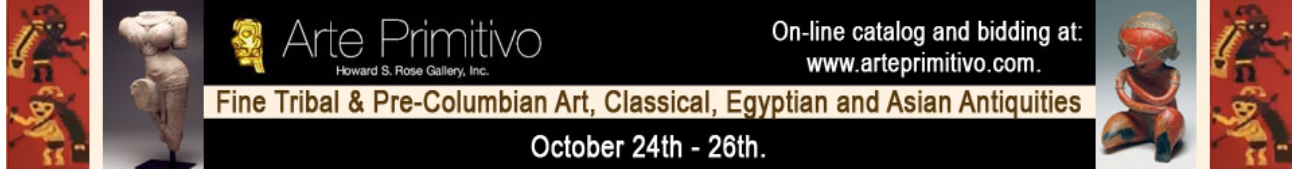
RACINE, WIS.- Opened October 21, 2013 through February 3, 2013, the [Racine Art Museum](#) exhibition *Collection Focus: Rosita Johanson* offers an in-depth experience of the work of late Canadian artist Rosita Johanson (1937-2007). A dressmaker by trade, fiber artist Johanson applied her natural ability of working with thread and fabric to creating colorful, embroidered narratives full of people, animals, and activity. This *Collections Focus* series solo exhibition at the Racine Art Museum offers 20 works created in the 1990s and early 2000s that together form an archive of Johanson's working methods and her subject matter over a prolonged period of time.

Drawing on childhood memories, her imagination, and stories her father told her, as well as some topical political and social issues, Johanson would piece together compositions using appliqué, machine embroidery, and hand-stitching. Her small scale designs (sizes range from 3 x 4 to 8 x 8 inches), which often began as sketches, culminated in layers of thread and fabric.

As an artist, Johanson was largely self-taught-she learned many of her methods of working from a lifetime of being near people interested in fiber and thread, and through her own investigations as an adult. She had two primary methods for executing her compositions-a combination of hand and machine

stitching or punch needle embroidery (also known as loop pile embroidery), which creates a surface similar to a miniature pile carpet. In addition, her textiles exhibit a strong interest in visual collage as she combined fabric with fiber and found object elements.

Johanson began presenting her work in professional venues in the mid-1980s. From 1984 through 1994 she regularly participated in outdoor art exhibitions in Toronto. However, it was her inclusion in the 6th and 7th International Biennale of Miniature Textiles in Hungary (1986 and 1988) that led to important international recognition of her work, including representation by Mobilia Gallery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In addition to the Racine Art Museum, Johanson's works are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Jean Lurçat Museum in Angers, France.



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