



Racine, WI May 2, 2014

## Museum Director Celebrates 40th Anniversary

The [Racine Art Museum \(RAM\)](#) in Racine, Wisconsin recently marked the 40th anniversary of **Bruce W. Pepich** as its Executive Director and Curator of Collections. Pepich oversees all aspects of RAM's nationally recognized collections and exhibitions of contemporary crafts and works on paper, as well as the museum's education programs.



Photography: David E. Jackson

Pepich graduated from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb in 1974 with a BA in Art History. He was hired as Project Manager that year at RAM's Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts, and became its Director in 1981. Since then, Pepich has grown the museum into a two-site institution. Under his leadership, the museum association raised over 10 million dollars in a capital campaign to open the Racine Art Museum (RAM) - an off-shoot of Wustum - housed in an award-winning building, which celebrated its tenth anniversary in downtown Racine in 2013.

Today, RAM is home to the largest collection of its kind in

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North America. The museum's craft holdings include over 4,000 pieces in art jewelry, ceramics, fibers, glass, metals, polymer, and wood, as well as over 4,000 works on paper. Pepich has also further cultivated RAM's reputation in the field of contemporary art and made the museum an important area attraction, bringing visitors to Southeastern Wisconsin from all over the nation and around the world.

In 2012, Pepich was inducted as an [Honorary Fellow into the American Craft Council's College of Fellows](#). The prestigious American Craft Council Awards recognize individuals and organizations for excellence and significant contributions to the field of contemporary American craft. Pepich has also received The Ann Koski Professional Excellence Award from the Wisconsin Federation of Museums, 2010; The State of Wisconsin Governor's Award in the Arts from the Wisconsin Foundation for the Arts and Governor Jim Doyle of the State of Wisconsin, 2010 and the Wisconsin Visual Art Lifetime Achievement Award from the Museum of Wisconsin Art, Wisconsin Visual Arts, and the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters in 2011. In addition, he is a published writer and has served as a juror for over 100 national and international art competitions and fellowship awards.

RAM Director of Operations and Development Laura D'Amato states, "On behalf of RAM's Board, members, and staff, we congratulate Bruce on 40 years of stellar leadership and unwavering dedication. Over the past four decades, he has shepherded RAM through the development of its world-class collection, exhibitions, and education programs - all of which are results of his extensive knowledge, high standards, and keen insight. He has worked tirelessly to showcase RAM and our community as a must-see destination for contemporary craft art."

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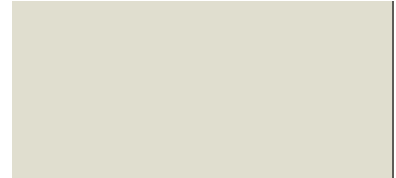
#### **RAM at 10 | Growing America's Craft Collection**

This year marks the Racine Art Museum's 10th Anniversary in Downtown Racine. Visitors are invited to discover stunning exhibitions that shine a light on RAM's achievements over the past decade and predict an even brighter future.

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.



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