

Racine & Me: RAM celebrates 20 years and new exhibits

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RACINE, WI (CBS 58) -- The Racine Art Museum is celebrating 20 years with new exhibits.

Tyler Potter is RAM's Marketing and Communications Specialist. He joined us in studio to talk about an array of new and exciting things going on at the museum.

The Racine Art Museum recently debuted several new exhibitions—some of which celebrate the museum's Twentieth Anniversary in Downtown Racine. To broaden the voices heard in the galleries and acknowledge the critical role staff, board, and volunteers play in getting an organization to a milestone anniversary, RAM Staff Selects: A Community-Curated Exhibition shifted the curatorial process into the hands of those who are not typically selecting works for display.

Those selecting works were encouraged to share their rationale for their choices, if so desired, which are included on label copy and in gallery handouts. Variations on a Theme: Artists' Books at RAM surveys a specialty focus of the institution, drawing from over 550 artists' books in its holdings—a collection that may be one of the largest of its kind in a Midwestern art museum. Collection Focus: Don Reitz underscores RAM's commitment to chronicling the career of a beloved artist working primarily in ceramics who spent 1962–88 living and working in Wisconsin while actively teaching as faculty at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. RAM produced a full-color, 16-page catalogue to correspond with this exhibition, featuring an essay on the significance of Reitz's work as well as an interview with notable collectors and friends of the artist. Presented concurrently with Collection Focus: Don Reitz, Wisconsin Artists: 1960–90 surveys the rich and layered creative production that took place in the State during the same time period that Reitz taught in the ceramics department at UW-Madison.

On display at all hours of the day in the museum's unique, street-facing Windows on Fifth Gallery, RAM's First 20 Years: A Visual History of the Art and Architecture blends objects from RAM's holdings with photographs of the building designed by Brininstool + Lynch and the museum's galleries filled with art. This exhibition is also an homage to Brad Lynch, a partner at Brininstool + Lynch and Racine native. Lynch, who passed away in 2022, took his first art classes at RAM's Wustum Museum and incorporated his own experiences being raised in this community into his work on RAM.

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