



FLINT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

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FUNCTION, FORM, AND FANTASY: CERAMICS FROM THE DR. ROBERT AND DEANNA HARRIS BURGER COLLECTION

(Flint, MI) Function, Form, and Fantasy will be on view May 7 through August 14. Drawn from the collection of Dr. Robert and Deanna Harris Burger, this exhibition offers a unique look at the recent history of ceramics—from the mid-20th century to present day—highlighting the diversity of styles and intense creativity of expression in the medium of clay.

The exhibition is divided into three sections that explore this exemplary collection

- **FUNCTION** In this section, the ceramic works are traditional forms or shapes (vase, bowl, or plate) that are essentially functional, even if their techniques are experimental.
- **FORM** Free of the need to make a useful or “utilitarian” object, ceramicists could instead experiment with the properties of clay and the chemistry of glazes. Using a sculptural approach, ceramicists often began with familiar shapes but manipulated the forms so that the original shape is no longer recognizable.
- **FANTASY** While some ceramicists used this new freedom from function to push the possibilities of form, shape, and color, others ventured into figuration, narrative subject matter, and manipulation of historical and traditional forms. Using the term “fantasy,” this section encompasses a diversity of artistic approaches, from the literal and comical to the surreal and futuristic.

The ceramics in Function, Form, and Fantasy range from bold, expressionistic forms to simple, elegant motifs, from sizes smaller than 3-inches tall to larger-than-life. The works by such well-known ceramicists, including Peter Voulkos, Viola Frey, Adrian Saxe, and Patti Warashina, are both thought-provoking and mysterious, blurring the lines between craft and fine art. Dr. Robert and Deanna Harris Burger have been collecting contemporary ceramic works of art since the 1970s. They were inspired by the beautiful forms, colors, and innovative techniques used to create the artworks. Mrs. Burger has ties to Flint, having enjoyed ceramic classes at the Flint Institute of Arts in her youth. Today, the Burgers reside in Florida and together have built an impressive art collection using the knowledge they have gained through studying and visiting exhibitions, galleries, studios, private collections, and taking studio classes. Since 2005, Dr. and Mrs. Burger have donated nearly 250 works of art to the FIA, including over 200 ceramic works and 40 works on paper.

The Flint Institute of Arts is located just two blocks off I-475 in the Flint Cultural Center between the University of Michigan-Flint and Mott Community College. Museum hours are Monday – Friday, 12p–5p; Saturday, 10a–5p; Sunday, 1p–5p. Admission to the FIA is free to members and children under 12; Adults \$7; Senior Citizens and Students \$5. Saturdays are free thanks to FirstMerit Bank.

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For more information call 810.234.1695 or visit FintArts.org/Exhibitions.