

## University Gallery

FINE ARTS CENTER  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS  
151 PRESIDENTS DRIVE (OFFICE 2)  
AMHERST, MA 01003-9331  
VOICE: 413.545.3670  
FAX: 413.545.2018  
[www.umass.edu/fac/universitygallery](http://www.umass.edu/fac/universitygallery)

The University Gallery of the University of Massachusetts Amherst is pleased to announce the opening of *Markus Raetz*, an exhibition that presents work in different media by one of Switzerland's most respected artists. Using figurative, still-life, and landscape subjects, Raetz delves into his fascination with the act of seeing and the process of recognition through such devices as visual puns, optical illusions, and anamorphosis. The exhibition, which was organized by The Arts Club of Chicago, covers over 30 years of work and features a selection of the artist's sculptures, wall installations, drawings, and watercolors. *Markus Raetz* is on view at the University Gallery, the only other venue for the exhibition, from September 15 through October 26 and from November 3 through December 14. An opening will be held on Friday, September 14 from 5 to 7 p.m. with the artist in attendance.

Since the 1960s, Raetz has created artworks that are both playful and complex in exploring how the mind identifies what the eye sees. He uses a variety of materials — leaves, cardboard, bronze, gesso — to make pieces that change from one shape to another as the viewer moves around them or that become visually legible at a particular spot and distance. In his sculpture *Dryade* (1985-88), for example, Raetz constructs an anamorphic image of a wood nymph's torso, the contours of which can only be seen as a whole from a specific position and with the help of a mirror. The viewer gleefully experiences the instant when optical and conceptual pathways cross, a quality which forever keeps the work in the present.

Drawing has always been important to Raetz and several facsimile copies of his notebooks will be exhibited. The artist shows the same interest in perspectival systems as in his sculptural works, but here the subtle transformations and distortions are executed with simple lines or washes of color. Also included in the exhibition will be one of Raetz's wall drawings, *Four Heads IX* (1982-93), in which the artist creates a sequence of four delicate portraits using eucalyptus leaves and straight pins. Whatever the medium, his ultimate aim is to engage the viewer in a game of constantly shifting images that investigate the subjective nature of perception.

Markus Raetz was born in Büren an der Aare, Switzerland in 1941, and has lived mostly in Bern since 1963. He exhibits often in European galleries and museums such as the Musée Rath, Geneva (1994), the Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki (1994), and IVAM Centre Julio Gonzalez, Valencia (1993). Raetz represented his country at the São Paulo Bienal in 1998 and at the Venice Biennale in 1988. The only other museum exhibitions of Raetz's work in the United States have been held at the San Diego Museum