

# RaZoO FoLk ArT GaLLerY



ANTIQUE & DESIGN CENTER AT TIME SQUARE  
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Unexpected and inimitable in scheme, venue and presentation, Razoo Folk Art Gallery is quietly becoming one of Broward County's premier showcases for folk, outsider and visionary artwork. Tucked away in a loft above The Antique & Design Center located near the intracoastal on the southeast corner of Federal Highway and Oakland Park Blvd, Razoo has called Ft. Lauderdale home for more than one year. Owner and art collector, Terry Michael Kost, is a life-long aficionado of obscure, self-taught 'outsider' artists whose work is not usually appealing to the mainstream, although the trend is growing. He prides himself on representing non-traditional artists who depict art in its raw form. "It is art that one often 'feels' before actually thinking about. The best pieces hit you in the gut, not the forehead," the New Orleans native said.

Featuring art and objects that celebrate the "Creative Spirit," Kost represents a variety of artists whose work has been featured locally, nationally and internationally. Artists such as the 'Blue Bike Guys,' Steve Sticht and Tommy Doodle, have made their conspicuous blue bicycles a reputable metropolitan mainstay around Ft. Lauderdale city streets. Others, such as award-winning artist Judith Polstra, a native of New Mexico, has created a cult following with her decorative, quaint and vividly bejeweled mannequins that conjure images of glamour, vanity and female sexuality. Senegal-born abstract and neo-expressionist Lucien Leconte has exhibited his works around the world, from South Florida to Central West Africa. His use of native materials and symbolism in his artwork has established him as a foremost visionary artist.

Kost readily admits that South Florida is not traditionally a strong art market for the type of outsider art offered at Razoo. However, he has managed to successfully operate his gallery and currently represents more than 55 indigenous and foreign folk artists. Not only are his artists unique in their constitution and presentation, but also the gallery name itself has a unique and thought-provoking connotation. Razoo is a term of derision meaning 'worthless.' From his native Louisiana heritage, Kost defines it as 'get there first or take all the marbles.' He also refers to the Australian red coin myth that birthed the term 'not worth a red razoo.' Literally, the artwork that Kost features can either be considered a real find if you 'get there first,' or what you actually find may not be worth 'a red cent,' depending on your perception and your passion for this art form.

By Kim Alexander

