

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG WORK INSPIRED BY CUBA ON DISPLAY AT NGA

Washington, DC, April 6, 1989 -- J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery of Art, announced today that Cuban Acre, the sixth loan in a series of major new works by contemporary American artist, Robert Rauschenberg, will be on view in the National Gallery's East Building through mid-summer. The work, a promised gift, went on display last month in recognition of the Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (R.O.C.I.) exhibition in Cuba last year.

R.O.C.I. is an evolving, cumulative exhibition containing several hundred Rauschenberg paintings, sculptures, and photographs created over the last fifteen years. Approximately half these works have been inspired by the current R.O.C.I. exhibition tour project beginning in 1985. For each country visited by R.O.C.I., Rauschenberg creates a suite of new works reflecting the host country's diverse cultural identities and his experiences there. An example of each country group is shown subsequently at the National Gallery to celebrate the tour program. Upon completion of the world tour, there will be a culminating exhibition of these works, combined with selections of the larger touring R.O.C.I. exhibition at the National Gallery, commencing in January 1991.

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In Cuba, the R.O.C.I. exhibition was on view February 10 through April 3, 1988. The more than twenty-thousand square foot show was installed in three locations in Havana: the National Museum, Fuerza Castle, and the Americas House.

"Through the display of Cuban Acre, the National Gallery is once again signaling its interest in the R.O.C.I. project," said Brown.

Cuban Acre, created for this innovative project between R.O.C.I. and the National Gallery, consists of six galvanized steel panels on which Rauschenberg has painted a montage, in acrylic and enamel, of silkscreened images selected by the artist from photographs he shot traveling the length of Cuba. The highly colored images show, among other subjects, the back of a late-1950s American-made station wagon, license plate close-up, a horse, flowers, stacked sacks of sugar, the baroque architecture of old Havana, graffiti, a skull, part of a flag, and several images of workers. The colors of Cuban Acre range from bright enamel orange and reds, blues, greens, to delicate whites, grays, and blacks.

Rauschenberg supports the idea that men can communicate honestly and openly through art despite language barriers. His objective for R.O.C.I. is to promote world peace and understanding through examples of his art representing many cultures. To date R.O.C.I. has made stops in Mexico, Chile, Venezuela, China, Tibet, Japan, Cuba, and the Soviet Union.