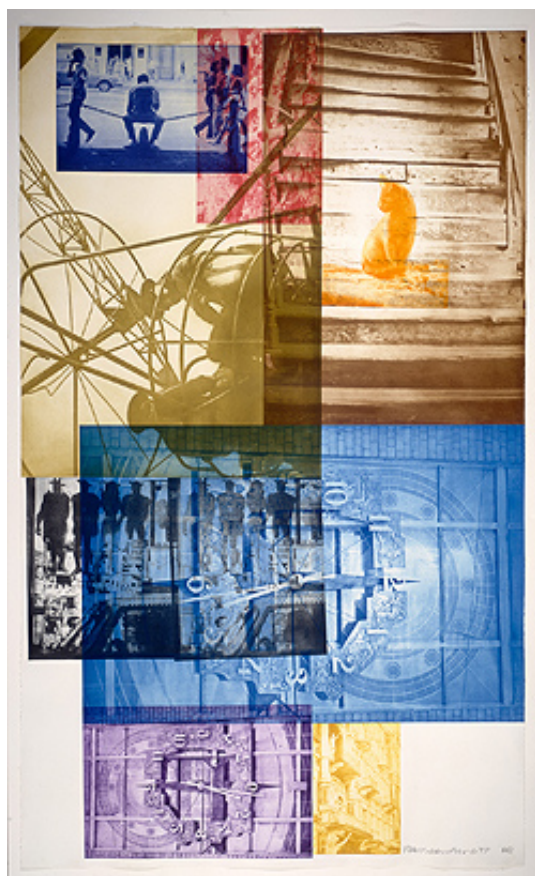


Release Date: October 12, 2007

Five Decades of Robert Rauschenberg Prints from the National Gallery of Art and Related Collections on View October 28, 2007 through March 30, 2008



Robert Rauschenberg

American, born 1925

Soviet/American Array III, 1988

photogravure, Published by Universal Limited Art Editions, Bay Shore, New York

sheet: 223.8 x 134.9 cm (88 1/8 x 53 1/8)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Universal Limited Art Editions and the Artist

Washington, DC – Robert Rauschenberg's boundless experimentation and his rich collaborations with talented printers will provide the focus for *Let the World In: Prints by Robert Rauschenberg from the National Gallery of Art and Related Collections*. The

exhibition will present 58 outstanding prints, including some never before seen in a museum, on view at the National Gallery of Art, October 28, 2007, through March 30, 2008, in the Gallery's West Building prints and drawings galleries.

"The National Gallery of Art is fortunate to have more than 400 prints by Robert Rauschenberg in its collection," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "This exhibition will feature the lithographs, screenprints, and intaglios of an artist who has sustained extraordinary creative powers across more than five decades and who has launched printmaking in new directions through his experiments in collaborative workshop environments."

Exhibition and Organizational Sponsor

This exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington.

This exhibition is made possible by Lockheed Martin Corporation.

The Exhibition

The exhibition takes its title from a statement made by the art historian Leo Steinberg, who wrote that Rauschenberg's art "let the world in again," referring to the artist's integration of everyday objects and his use of representation at a time when abstraction dominated.

It will be arranged chronologically in five galleries, starting with Rauschenberg's prints from the early 1960s and ending in the current decade. Works to be shown come from many generous donors to the Gallery and will be augmented by select promised gifts and loans.

Gifts on view from the artist and the print publisher Gemini G.E.L.—an important print workshop and publisher in Los Angeles—will include *Source (Speculations)* (1996), a fusion of disparate images such as a clothesline and Stonehenge, and *Vamp* (2000), which incorporates Rauschenberg's photographic images of street life taken when he traveled to Marrakech in 1999. He was in Morocco to take photographs for his Gemini projects. The recent acquisition, *Stunt Man II* (1962) completes the series and will be on view with *Stunt Man I* (1962) and *Stunt Man III* (1962).

Booster (1967), a key work produced at Gemini G.E.L. features a six-foot-high x-ray image of Rauschenberg's body. It was the largest hand-pulled, single-sheet print ever made at the time, challenging painting's dominance as a medium. Seemingly random images suffuse *Booster*, including a chair, an astronomical calendar, two drills, and a photograph of a man in the midst of a long jump—offering viewers an opportunity to bring their own interpretation to the work.

Examples from the vivid *Soviet/American Array* (1988) series will be on display, as well as *Preview* (1974) whose iconic images—two antique cars surrounding a Greek kouros—are printed on layers of gauzy fabric that shift with the slightest breeze, causing corresponding shifts in appearance. Two works from the artist's *Ruminations* series will be included. *topher* (1999) and *Big and Little Bullys* (1999), are both gifts from the National Gallery Collectors Committee. These rich, tonal images present the artist and his family and reveal Rauschenberg at his most meditative.

On loan from Rauschenberg will be the first state of his seminal print *Accident* (1963), a work never before on view in a museum. In its final version, Rauschenberg printed from a lithographic stone that had accidentally broken, emphasizing creative forces beyond his control. Two prints and a working proof from the *Bellini* series (1987)—the two prints on loan from the artist and Patricia Alper-Cohn and David I. Cohn, and the working proof on loan from print workshop Universal Limited Arts Edition (ULAE)—reveal the artist's integration of his own photographs with images appropriated from great works of art from the past. A selection of Rauschenberg's *Shirtboards* (1991)—based on 1952 collages that used cardboard from shirts that he had laundered while he was traveling in Italy and Morocco—highlight the artist's eagerness to experiment with whatever materials are available and of interest to him.

The Artist

Rauschenberg (b. 1925) grew up in Port Arthur, Texas and received international attention starting in the 1950s when he expanded beyond abstract expressionism and minimalist monochromatic paintings. In works he called *Combines*, he fused everyday objects in a blend of painting and sculpture.

Beginning in the early 1960s, Rauschenberg created superb painterly prints filled with images he clipped from newspapers and magazines. As with the *Combines*, his prints brought representation and the commonplace into avant-garde practice. A water ring from a drinking glass, the face of a coin impressed onto paper, a traced outline from a cane, and the conscious inclusion of fingerprints all make reference to worldly objects and actions. Rauschenberg also branched out into new processes such as digital imaging as well as printing on unconventional papers, cardboard, fabric, and plastic.

In 1985, Rauschenberg traveled internationally to promote world peace and understanding through the vehicle of art. Calling his project the Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI), he visited and exhibited in Mexico, Chile, Venezuela, China, Tibet, Japan, Cuba, the Soviet Union, Berlin, and Malaysia. The culminating exhibition took place at the National Gallery of Art, Washington in 1991 as part of the Gallery's 50th anniversary celebration.

Many credit Rauschenberg with bridging the gap between abstract expressionism and pop art. Today his work is included in virtually every important international collection of contemporary art.

Curator and Related Activities

The exhibition curator is Charles Ritchie, associate curator of modern prints and drawings. An exhibition brochure written by Ritchie will be available to visitors free of charge.

On Sunday, November 18, 2007, at 6:30 p.m., the red fish blue fish percussion ensemble will perform a complete and expanded version of *Sanctuary* by Roger Reynolds, composed especially for performance in the East Building Auditorium and ground-floor atrium. The National Gallery of Art is collaborating with the Contemporary Music Forum and the National Endowment for the Arts to make possible the creation and performance of *Sanctuary*, which is presented with support from the Randy Hostetler Living Room Fund of Washington, DC.

Fully Awake: Black Mountain College (2007), a documentary by Cathryn Davis and

Neeley House, will be screened on December 23, 26, 27, and 28 at 1:00 p.m in the East Building Auditorium. The film features archival photographs and interviews, exploring the college's influential role in the development of American art of the twentieth century. Rauschenberg attended Black Mountain College in the late 1940s.

On Sunday, January 27, 2008, the Central Bucks High School-West Chamber Choir, under the direction of Dr. Joseph Ohrt, artistic director and conductor, will perform music by John Cage, Stephen Caldwell, Ola Gjeilo, Ohrt, and Matthew Sampson. The performance starts at 6:30 p.m. in the West Building, West Garden Court.

Gallery talks will be held December 9 at noon and 18 at 1 p.m. The Educators with Curators series explores the Rauschenberg exhibition on November 8, 13, and 15 at noon. All gallery talks start in the West Building Rotunda.

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General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit www.nga.gov/renovation (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at twitter.com/ngadc.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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