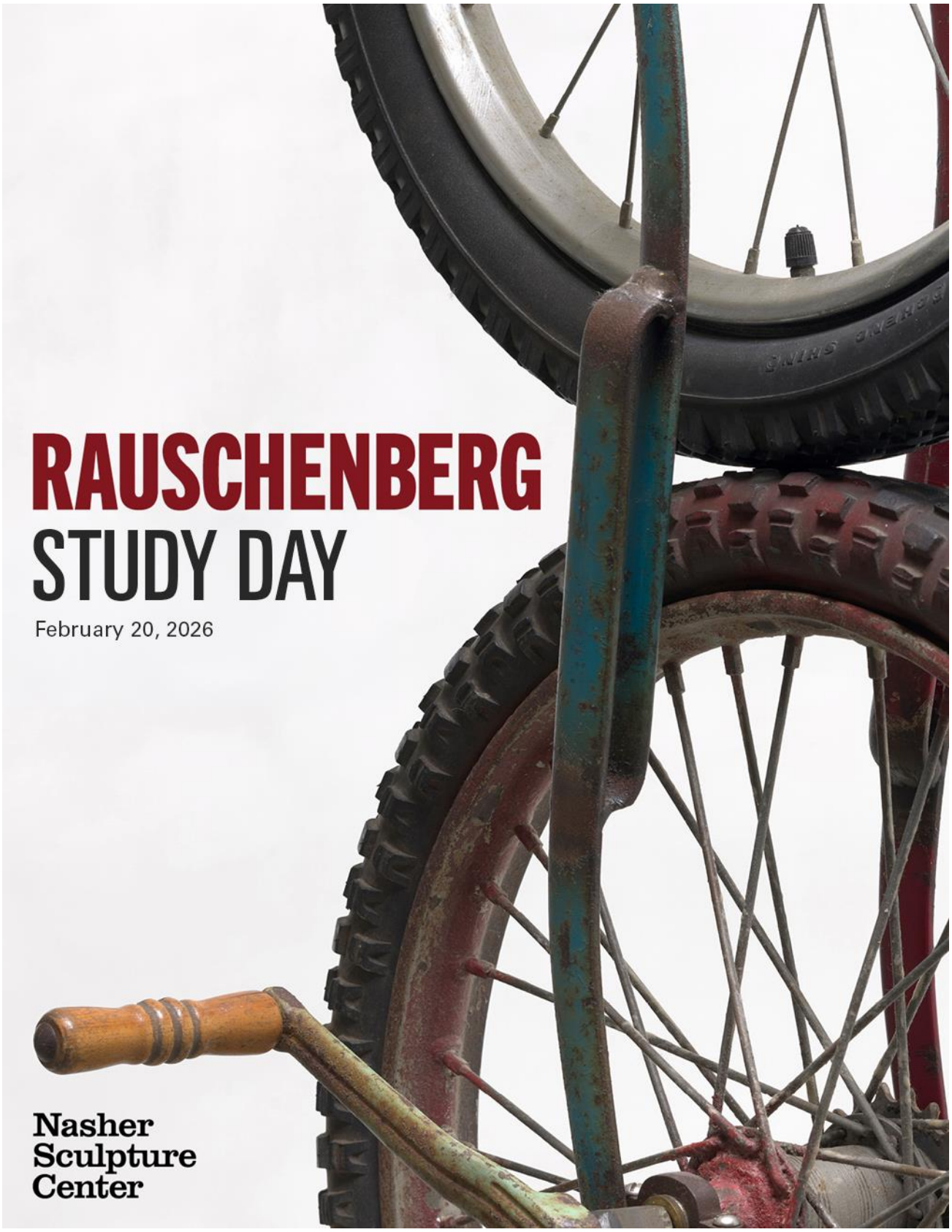

RAUSCHENBERG
STUDY DAY

February 20, 2026

Nasher
Sculpture
Center

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This Study Day was organized under the leadership of Nasher Sculpture Center Senior Curator Catherine Craft and Curator of Education Anna Smith. We extend our gratitude to the participants, whose contributions explored Robert Rauschenberg's engagement with technology, his commitment to collaborative ways of working, the relationship of his sculpture to different cultures, and the influence of popular culture on his practice. We also gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation in making this digital publication possible.

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About Rauschenberg100

Robert Rauschenberg's strong conviction that engagement with art can nurture people's sensibilities as individuals, community members, and citizens was key to his ethos. The Centennial celebrations seek to allow audiences familiar with him and those encountering the artist for the first time to form fresh perspectives about his artwork.

A year of global activities and exhibitions in honor of Rauschenberg's Centennial reexamines the artist through a contemporary lens, highlighting his enduring influence on generations of artists and advocates for social progress. The Centennial's activation of the artist's legacy promotes cross-disciplinary explorations and creates opportunities for critical dialogue.

RAUSCHENBERG SCULPTURE

Catherine Craft, Senior Curator, Nasher Sculpture Center

Over a career spanning six decades, Robert Rauschenberg (1925–2008) produced a remarkably influential body of work that included sculpture alongside painting, photography, prints, performance, costume and set design, and technological experiments. Utilizing images from magazines and newspapers and materials he found on the street and in scrapyards, Rauschenberg sought to create art that could embrace, and dwell in, the world.

Rauschenberg's sculptures built upon modern examples of assemblage pioneered by such artists as Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948), and Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), especially the latter's readymades—everyday objects designated works of art through their selection by the artist. Often working at a much larger scale than this earlier generation, Rauschenberg incorporated a vast and unlikely range of things into his art. Their surfaces frequently accommodated photographs, squares of fabrics, or other items; within, interior spaces could shelter unexpected objects or hint at unknown depths. This play between an artwork's interior and exterior meant that every facet of its physical presence became essential to its identity, an egalitarian approach to composition encouraging curiosity and close observation.

Intrinsic to Rauschenberg's innovations was his attitude to art-making. Rather than the popular Romantic concept of a solitary genius expressing innermost feelings, he envisioned a creative approach thoroughly engaged in the world. The word "collaboration" appears frequently in accounts of Rauschenberg's life and work: collaboration with other artists, with creative practitioners in other fields, or even with the objects that went into his art.

Inspired by Rauschenberg's example, the Nasher's Study Day invited artists, students, curators, conservators, and scholars to gather together and discuss aspects of the artist's work. What follows are human-generated transcriptions of individual talks on sculptures in the exhibition, which have been reviewed by Anna Smith and myself, as well as the presenters. Readers are asked to keep in mind that what they are reading was originally oral presentations.

Installation view, *Rauschenberg Sculpture*. Nasher Sculpture Center, 2026. Photo: Kevin Todora

SUSAN DAVIDSON

Volume I Editor, Catalogue Raisonné, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, on *Greenhouse*, 1950

I first encountered this work in 1990 when Walter Hopps and I were starting to work on the *Rauschenberg: The Early 1950s* exhibition for the Menil Collection. I was so intrigued by [*Greenhouse*] because it looked so different from the other artworks we were expecting to include. That exhibition was meant to focus on how Black Mountain College spawned who Bob Rauschenberg became, and somehow we didn't really know what to do with this work. So it didn't make the cut, so to speak. But my work now on the catalogue raisonné has really allowed us to go deep into what this artwork is and the time in which it was made.

This is really the first time since the 1997 retrospective that the work has traveled and been seen. So it's been a little bit of a hidden gem within [Rauschenberg's] oeuvre; we're really thrilled to see it in this context, where it sets the stage for how Bob begins to think about sculpture. Rauschenberg goes to Black Mountain in 1948, and he spends a full academic year there. What we've learned through our catalogue raisonné research is that he didn't make as much work there in that first academic year as we believed, and he was working mostly on portraiture.

Then he comes back to New York with Susan Weil, whom he met in Paris at the Académie Julian [in 1948], and who introduced him to the idea of going to Black Mountain. They marry in June 1950, and they also enroll at the Art Students League in New York City [in September 1949]. It seems that they were doing a lot of work on Outer Island, which is off the coast of Connecticut, around Stonington, and it's part of the Thimble Islands. The Weil family owned a house there.

We think that they were pretty much living at Outer Island and making a lot of different types of work, experimenting in a way. [*Greenhouse*] seems to come from that moment on Outer Island

and was probably [made] in the summertime. We believe it is a type of fishing trap that was found along the shores of Outer Island and that [Rauschenberg] opened it up in some way or another. If you get close, you'll see how parts of it are wired together [at] the side. So, you can also see how he may have entered [the trap] in order to put [in] all of these branches and this glass globe. And he divides it in a very complicated structural way.

The top part is copper wire, [from] which he's created a small forest of little trees. The rest of the natural elements that you see are all twigs and branches, and then there is this glass globe. He's created a shelf here [in the cage's top third], and he's also divided the piece in its lower third into four sections where you can see the various branches. One of the things that has puzzled us in our research is that [Rauschenberg] very clearly said that he made this work the year he married [Susan]. So we know it's definitely from 1950. And based on other research that we've done through the CR, we've seen that [Rauschenberg] was working a lot in glass at this time.

[Rauschenberg] submitted the work to a juried exhibition here in Dallas in September 1950 and forgot about it. So it's wonderful that it's returned home in a way. It wasn't until 1975 that the work was found again, in the Dallas Museum's basement, and returned to [Rauschenberg]. Generous man that he was, in taking [*Greenhouse*] back, he offered to give the museum another of his artworks in return [*Night Hutch* (*Hoarfrost*)].

The fascinating thing about this work, for me, was that we've learned, or we believe, that the glass orb was perhaps first originally inside this center opening of twigs. And it must have fallen out, because it's broken and the broken piece is all the way at the bottom of the artwork. We think that it's possible that the orb, which was inside the twigs, fell sometime during transport and broke. Another theory, though, is—if you have the opportunity to look really closely—the cut is not jagged. So it almost makes you wonder, if, in fact, it was done in advance.

I will say that it still remains one of the most enigmatic pieces for me, and I think [it] is incredibly fascinating as it sets up how he starts to think about sculpture and to work with sculpture. It does seem, too, that the concept of working with glass was something that Rauschenberg played rather seriously with in and around 1950 and never really returned to it again until the 1990s. When we did the 1997 retrospective, Rauschenberg started to blow glass at UrbanGlass, and he made a series of tires and pillows and brooms, objects that had become iconic within his own oeuvre. So we have this very early moment, and then he doesn't really return to working in glass till much, much later in his career.

Greenhouse, 1950. Wire mesh, sticks, wire, twigs, glass orb, glass shards, and paint. 54 x 13 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches (137.3 x 34.9 x 35 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Photo: Kevin Todora

CLAIRE TAGGART

Conservator, Nasher Sculpture Center, on *Music Box*, c. 1955

When you become a conservator, you have to focus on an area of specialization at a certain point, whether that's paintings, works on paper, photography, furniture, textiles, or kinetic art. If you are me, and you decide to focus on modern and contemporary sculpture, you get to deal with a lot of those things, especially with Rauschenberg. In the early days of my internship experience, I was able to work on a couple of his works. They really put me to task, having to consider so many of these materials that might normally be outside the specialization for a sculpture or object conservator.

Reviewing this work, while it looks fairly simply placed within this vitrine, it does require some challenging intervention to install it. It has three stones and two feathers on the interior that travel separately from the wooden box so that they don't jostle around during travel. When installing it, you're looking at a reference photo to properly assemble the work in a way that you're ensuring is in line with past representations of the artwork. This is something that we think about in conservation quite a bit; using documentation is a way for us to avoid subjectivity.

We've spent decades trying to achieve objectivity in conservation. We do that mainly through documentation, but also self-reporting, and that's usually done in a passive voice, and that sort of takes the [personal agency] out of the process. There has been a bit of a change [in the field] recently, tied into how that's done when talking about your relationship with an artwork as you're making these decisions. I think that curators and conservators are often left to interpret something that existed as a really dynamic object. And so using this puzzle to go back and forth between an image and installing this work is also a physical challenge because you are handling very delicate materials.

Feathers should not be handled with bare hands because they are very vulnerable to the oils in our fingertips. So we use tweezers to delicately place the feathers. They don't want to do what

you want them to do half the time. The stones are different because you can't really use tweezers because they are slippery, and they scrape; it's difficult to balance them on the nails without having the tactility of your hands.

When we talk about using gloves in conservation, there are some materials that are more acceptable to touch without gloves. Thankfully, inorganics like ceramic and stone are some of the things that you can safely handle with clean hands. In this instance, you're reaching into a box that's essentially like a sort of animal trap. If you reach in and you try to pull away, you could accidentally do damage to the work by snagging it with a glove. So, with my recent tetanus shot, I volunteered to be the person to place those stones. That happened a couple of times because we had done photography of the work at the request of the Rauschenberg Foundation and the work's owner, Jasper Johns, as well.

So I've navigated handling this piece several times. No scratches, thankfully. But it's a really interesting question—and I think this piece in particular is a really good example to start those conversations—why this piece is shown in a static way when it is a dynamic artwork. We have several examples in the show where we are activating the works. So why aren't we activating this piece before we install it? It is such a simple "machine" compared to the *Revolvers*, which require maintenance of the lights and the motors. Our Visitor Experience team does an exceptional job showing visitors what can be possible with those works: why not this one?

From my perspective, there's a lot to be damaged in shaking it. You could lose the surface of the nails. You could damage the stones, and certainly the feathers. Stones will eventually become sand with enough agitation. So it is this sacrifice that you make every time you activate a work like this. It opens up these bigger questions of how best we can think about the artists' process and also long-term preservation.

Rauschenberg had some ideas about conservation. In the film *Painters Painting*, he says his art making is "closer to a collaboration with materials than to any kind of conscious manipulation and control."[1] Should we be thinking a bit more about that with this work? It is so related to performance and music, it's literally called *Music Box*. The sound is part of that, and how we can safely document that and share it with the public is up for a really interesting conversation for everyone looking after similar types of artwork.

[1] *Painters Painting: The New York Art Scene 1940-1970*, 1972, directed by Emile de Antonio.

Music Box (Elemental Sculpture), ca. 1955. Wood box, nails, stones, and feathers. 11 x 7 1/2 x 9 1/4 inches (27.9 x 19.1 x 23.5 cm). Collection of Jasper Johns. © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Courtesy of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

CHRISTOPHER BLAY

Artist and Director of Public Programs, National Juneteenth Museum, on *Revolver V*, 1967

My introduction to Rauschenberg's work was the 1995 sculpture exhibition in Fort Worth at the Modern Art Museum. I had just started community college, and I didn't have art as an option in grade school, so everything was new to me. I went into that show and saw cardboard boxes on the wall and I was like, "What?" Rauschenberg's work informs my own practice and it dispels the hierarchy of materials for me, and allows me to not think about how is this going to fit or how long is it going to last? I like the way he embraced the lifecycle of materials and left things to be what they were, and his use of reclaimed materials.

Of all the works in the Nasher's show, I kept coming back to the *Revolvers* because of how they seem to fuse all these elements of the found image, silkscreen, mechanical elements, and this fusion of the world outside these doors and the world inside the studio. Like a balance of handmade versus readymade.

We're talking about how static *Music Box* feels and how maybe there's something lost if we don't see the *Revolver* going. But I prefer to experience it even as a static object because of the layers. Because it's viewable in the round, you start composing your own experience as you walk around it. And because it's such a beautiful combination of materials, with the heavily mechanical individual motors and how that relates to industry, and Rauschenberg's collaboration with fabricators and scientists to make things like this happen.

Sometimes I want to decipher each image and try to understand how significant it is, but as I look over his complete body of work, I see those as inviting the everyday and the happenstance to be present in the work as a way of fusing the way we live and experience the world with the way we express, or he expresses, in art-making.

I really enjoyed [a] video of how he and Brice Marden were making and installing these things.[2] Brice Marden recounted a moment when the mechanics weren't there yet. He described observing [Rauschenberg] do some really deep thinking about making these pieces and how fascinating it was to see him in deep thought about the placement of the discs, doing a little painting and putting it back to see how it connected with everything else before the final plexiglass screening.

This work is usually described as groundbreaking, avant-garde, experimental, but the word that comes to me the most when I think about [Rauschenberg's] work and pieces like this is *individual*. It feels very liberated as an art maker or as a writer or any other sort of creative endeavor, because the world can interrupt where you want to go with the things that you're making. I'm glad that he was not a conservator because we wouldn't get these sort of streams of, "I want to make this, I'm going to make this." And he makes it, and lets the conservators worry about it. I also like this idea of him thinking more about what he was making at the present and not looking back: I really liked that energy.

In the video, the way that he created the *Revolvers'* movements with the controls seemed like someone playing the piano or something. It just felt very moving, different things at different paces, and something that connects everything that he did up to that point together. I really positively respond to that.

[2] Excerpt from "The Walls Come Tumbling Down," an episode of *Eye on Art*, produced by Merrill Brockway (New York: WCBS, 1967).

Christopher Blay activates *Revolver V* as Catherine Craft looks on. *Revolver V,* 1967. Silkscreen ink on five rotating plexiglass discs in metal base with electric motors and control box. 54 x 52 3/4 x 24 1/4 inches (137.2 x 134 x 61.6 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Photo: Anna Smith

ANNA LOVATT

Associate Professor of Art History, Southern Methodist University, on *Untitled (Venetian)*, 1973

Rauschenberg produced the *Venetian* series between 1972 and 1973 when he was living on the island of Captiva off the Gulf Coast of Florida. It's a series where he collected found materials, and this sculpture was constructed from tire tread and wooden fragments that look like part of a pallet or fence. Other *Venetians* include rope, stone, and even a coconut. These are the washed-up flotsam and jetsam that he has found around the island, in the area around his home and along the coastline. In that sense, they are reminiscent of *Greenhouse*, using salvaged materials washed up on the shore to produce a sculpture.

As well as the materials, another thing that is striking about the *Venetian* series is that the colors are the inherent colors of the material. There's no applied color, just the materials as they are found in shades of brown, black, beige. We could describe these as washed-out, sun-bleached colors, reminiscent of the coastal landscape where these objects were found.

As well as color, the *Venetian* series is characterized by its use of form. Often the forms are sagging, crumpled, dragging along the ground or propped up on supports, as this tire tread is by the wooden structures on either side. They engage in a kind of dialogue with Post-Minimalist sculpture, which emerged in the late 1960s and was described by one of its proponents, Robert Morris, as a kind of "anti-form." So, we can think of form collapsing into the ground in this moment in sculptural history in the U.S. in the late 1960s and early '70s.

Rauschenberg said that after moving to Captiva, "a desire built up in me to work in a material of waste and softness, something yielding with its only message a collection of lines imprinted

like a friendly joke."[3] I'm going to return to these ideas of sagging and imprinting throughout my talk.

By calling this series the *Venetians*, Rauschenberg also associated this sculptural language of salvage and the indexical trace or imprint with the Italian city of Venice. We know that he had visited Venice when he was there for the Biennale in 1964. He also traveled around Italy in the early 1950s with Cy Twombly, and then visited Venice again in 1972. That last visit initiated the series of *Venetian* sculptures produced on a different island, Captiva.

Rauschenberg described Venice in terms of a "vivid impression of elegance, of grandeur, of fragility and decay—this feeling of the city digging itself slowly into the waters, without us being able to do anything to help it."[4] Venice, as we all know, is slowly sinking, and Rauschenberg's *Venetian* series is also subject to this downward drag. All of the works in the series seem to pull down. They're very heavy. They seem to collapse to the ground.

In *Untitled*, this piece of tire tread, which is really frayed, is propped up by these two wooden fence-like structures. Fragments of rubber and pieces of tire also feature throughout the *Venetian* series. There are other works in this series where he's using a tire or a length of rubber and often trailing it in this way.

The tire might also remind us of other works by Rauschenberg, such as his famous combine, *Monogram* (1955–59), where the tire rings the waist of a goat. And a collaboration with John Cage from 1953 called *Automobile Tire Print*, where he inked the tire of Cage's car and Cage drove it across this length of paper to create a kind of drawing generated by the automobile.

The tire can be a circular object, as in *Monogram*. It can also be a mechanical device that converts rotational force into linear movement. And it can also be an instrument of inscription for Rauschenberg, something that leaves track marks upon the ground, as in his automobile tire print.

As I mentioned, at this moment in the Post-Minimalist sculpture of artists like Robert Morris, Barry Le Va, [and] Eva Hesse, often we see these linear lengths of material which are scattered on the ground—pieces of felt, pieces of rubber, pieces of metal. Robert Morris expressed some concern about this collapse of sculpture onto the ground in the late 1960s. He said sculpture was becoming too pictorial and the ground was acting like a drawing surface with these materials reading as lines inscribed upon it. I think Rauschenberg could be engaging with this language of Post-Minimalist sculpture and particularly with the idea of linearity and the relationship between figure and the literal ground of the gallery space. And *Untitled* also seems to relate to that line drawn by Cage's tire twenty years earlier.

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[3] Robert Rauschenberg cited in Kristin Howell, "Reading the body in Untitled *(Venetian)*," Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, 2021, https://www.rauschenbergfoundation.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Howell_ReadingtheBody.pdf, 5.
[4] Rauschenberg cited in Howell, 2.

Another point of reference that I'd like to draw out is to Italian art of the late 1960s and early '70s, specifically Arte Povera, a movement that coalesces around 1967. It was named by the critic and curator, Germano Celant, and it included artists like Mario Merz, Giuseppe Penone, and Michelangelo Pistoletto, who, just like Rauschenberg, wanted to act in the gap between art and life and also to engage in a critique of consumer culture. We can see Arte Povera as being in opposition to American Pop Art, because it's often using the detritus of consumer culture, industrial waste, as well as organic materials. And Rauschenberg, I think would've been very aware of this in 1973.

I don't want to limit the meanings of Rauschenberg's work, but I do want to layer another meaning upon this particular piece. This work is produced just after what is known as the Hot Autumn in Italy, when a series of protests and strikes took place across northern Italy, led by workers and students. Some of these protests centered on car and tire factories, specifically, the Pirelli tire factory in Milan and the Fiat car factory in Turin. These protests hinged on workers' rights, the right to higher pay, and the right to better working conditions. They ignited in 1969, which became known as the Hot Autumn, but they were ongoing in 1972 when Rauschenberg visited Venice. Although Venice was not a center of car manufacturing, there were nearby strikes and protests in Porto Marghera at petrochemical factories.

In 1969, workers at the Pirelli factory set fire to truckloads of tires that had been imported from Greece, which was then under a right-wing military dictatorship. This image of tires burning in the street as an act of protest by the workers circulated in the press in Italy but also internationally, because these demonstrations were connected with the student uprisings of 1968. I think it's very likely that Rauschenberg would have been aware of the connotations that tires had at this moment in Italy in relation to questions of labor, the commodity, and materiality. So, in addition to referencing his own earlier work, he might be perhaps alluding to this political upheaval that is happening in Italy at the time that he was making this series, inspired by his visit to Venice.

I think it is particularly interesting that Rauschenberg doesn’t refer to the history of Venice. In this work, he's less interested in the past of that ancient city and much more interested in its present. He's really situating sculptural practice amongst this political turmoil, the squalor, and the violence of the late 1960s and early '70s.

Untitled (Venetian), 1973. Tire tread and wood. 38 3/4 x 89 1/8 x 16 1/2 inches (98.5 x 226.5 x 42 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Photo: Kevin Todora

RACHEL HARRISON

Artist, on *Untitled (Early Egyptian)*, 1974

I want to talk a little bit about the show as a whole, because I really love it. And there are so many interesting things about it, for me, and we're all looking at how these works have conversations and how [Catherine Craft has] installed them. Some of my observations about the show, I think, are really obvious ones you've all had, which is that Rauschenberg was an incredibly voracious, restless experimenter, and that he never met a material he didn't like.

It could be ceramics in an industrial plant in Japan, or it could be the beach of Captiva. And wherever he might be, he would find a way to work there, with that kind of resourcefulness and on-your-toes spontaneity.

We're looking at work of tremendous quality. Rauschenberg made sure for himself that this work would have an afterlife [in his Foundation]. To see the range of it and the quality of the works, it's just incredible.

So then we get to the beach. I love this work [Untitled *(Early Egyptian)*] a lot because you could say that it deals with Minimalism, but then, you would have to contradict that in a lot of ways because every single box here is different, and every single box here has weathered some aspect of time that we don't really know about.

So, to contrast it with a Donald Judd-like perfectionism, or [Carl] Andre, or things that really deal with seriality, I'm going to contradict the idea that this has anything to do with seriality. Even though they look the same, they're not the same.

One of the things we don't know is, did he find the box this way, or did he beat it up? Is it the nature of the cardboard that it sagged after he put the glue and the sand on it? And as the sand adhered to the surface, what happens to the inside? Because cardboard takes moisture, and it sags. And that is something he couldn't control, which is true of a lot of his materials, I think.

So, in looking at the boxes together, it's really interesting how he positioned them on other boxes. There's a relationship of weight and gravity and balance, with one thing having contact with another thing, having contact with its edge, and then, the floor, because all sculpture deals with gravity. Even if it's lying about gravity, it has to confront some aspect of gravity: We're all standing here in the same way. So, those boxes that act as supports are really mysterious to me in that way. Was it just boxes that he found? Is there a reason that they are more square? These are the kinds of questions about putting the pieces together, because as he worked, these decisions might not have been completely thought out. It might have just been arbitrary, like, "This is the box I'm gonna take."

His need, early in his work, too, to fill up all the space, to take a canvas and just put tons and tons of layered images on top of them, on top of each other in the *Revolver*. In all of his earlier work, all the famous silk screens, he's just layering things on top of each other.

It's like he's filling up space, and he's filling up time, and he's filling up things with matter. And here it's almost like he's printing on the boxes. He's covering the boxes. I was looking, and I was like, "You don't really see the cardboard."

You do in the corner because of age. You see the cardboard only if you look for it because it's a little damaged, but you *know* it's cardboard. Because you could get the best fabricator in the world to make a box for you, right?

When he moved to Captiva, he couldn't go around and scavenge in the same way. I think he looked at the landscape, and he was on the beach. And he would go to the beach, and they would take these boxes and put glue all over them and roll them around on the beach. [Julia Blaut: He wrapped them in gauze.]

That's why they're stronger. That's why they haven't fallen apart. They're bandaged.

They're really beautiful. They create a surface like sandpaper. This kind of uniformity is what I was thinking about. But then, when you start to look, you think about all the things that have gotten caught from the oceans: [there] are all these bits of shells.

The bits of shells are all different sizes, and they've been beaten up by the waves. They come from the bottom, and they go to the top, and I feel that in this work. That's another way where I clearly find it oppositional to any ideas about minimalism or anything industrial, that the beach is here. Then, with the gauze, he's made something more recyclable, more permanent in that way. But it certainly doesn't "look like" the ocean.

The other interesting thing about the Egyptian series is that it comes out of his *Cardboard* series, which is one of my favorite bodies of work of his, actually, because it's so wrong. [For the *Cardboards*], he took boxes and flattened them out and put them on the walls. The *Cardboards* were also about denying the box—they were about taking the air out of the box, about taking the volume out of the box, about flattening out the box and making it more like a pattern, whereas the boxes [of the *Early Egyptians*] retain their volume and original shape for the thing that they were supposed to contain when they were first constructed.

But this is another thing that I love about this show, which is, especially in the years that these things were made, there weren't a lot of things in galleries and museums that looked like this. That radicality is something that might be hard to see from our 2026 perspective when artists work in so many different ways. But this is like brutalist architecture, in a way. It's rather unlikable, which might be another thing that draws me to it.

Untitled (Early Egyptian), 1974. Sand and acrylic on cardboard. 56 1/4 x 106 5/8 x 53 3/4 inches (143 x 270.7 x 136.6 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Photo: Kevin Todora

JULIA BLAUT

Senior Director of Curatorial Affairs, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, on *Trojan Wedge (Scale)*, 1977

Trojan Wedge is from the *Scale* series, which was made between 1977 and 1981 in Rauschenberg's studio in Captiva. The *Scales* are usually defined as the sculptural counterpart of a related series called the *Spreads* (1975–83)—wall-based works, made more or less at the same time as the *Scales*, and more or less with the same materials—paint and solvent-transferred images applied directly to plywood supports and to fabric collage, and often with the addition of found objects and often with a lot of mirroring and reflective materials, either metal or Plexiglas.

Defining a work of art by what it is not reminded me of a Rauschenberg quote from a 1968 interview with Richard Kostelanetz. Rauschenberg said, "Earlier I had this problem with the paintings that would be free-standing— […] I didn't think of them as sculpture […] it was unnatural for these to be hung on a wall. So when the sculptural or collage elements got so three-dimensional, then the most natural thing in the world was to put wheels on it and put it out into the middle of the room [...] I thought of them as paintings, but what to call them—painting or sculpture […] Once I called them "combines" people were confronted with the work itself, not what it wasn't […] The word really does have a use—it's a freestanding picture."[5] So the *Scales* are the "freestanding pictures" that relate to the *Spreads*, which are wall reliefs.

Rauschenberg began the *Spread* series just at the time that he was working on his mid-career retrospective, in 1976 at the National Collection of Fine Arts, curated by Walter Hopps, and was revisiting earlier work. Just following that retrospective, he began the *Scales*. *Trojan Wedge* comes at this pivotal moment and addresses many questions that he returns to across the

[5] Richard Kosetelanetz. "A Conversation with Robert Rauschenberg." *Parisian Review* (New Brunswick, N.J.) 35, no. 1 (Winter 1968), p. 96.

career: larger questions about painting and sculpture, and whether or not distinctions between them are relevant. While he was using imagery in some of his prints and transferred images in some of his fabric series, such as the *Hoarfrosts* (1974–76), the *Scales* are a return to his use of imagery in his sculpture after a hiatus in the earlier part of the seventies.

Trojan Wedge is also reflective of Rauschenberg's belief that a work of art should not be static. He said he felt strange about "the fixedness of a painting"[6] or a sculpture but rather wanted to see it as something that changes and that should be interactive with the viewer in the space around it—that it's essentially performative. I think that Trisha Brown [choreographer, dancer, and Rauschenberg's collaborator] said it best, Bob "does not like a painting's propensity just to hang there or a sculpture's just to sit."[7] In a variety of ways—adding wheels, mirrors, vibrating imagery—he activates his sculptures without actually activating them.

At the opening of this exhibition, Catherine [Craft] asked me how this piece was made, and I realized I didn't know the specifics. Rauschenberg never would do an oral history about his process. The conservator Carol Mancusi-Ungaro did a series of oral histories with living artists, but [Rauschenberg] steadfastly refused. So, after his death, we conducted oral histories at the Foundation, asking his studio assistants if they would come to the warehouse, where we created installations for them of artworks that they had worked on. We filmed them and had a conservator dialogue with them. These accounts have proven to be so useful as these are the people who can tell you, "Oh, this is how it was made."

So, how was *Trojan Wedge* made? The frame construction is made of wood. Rauschenberg's studio assistant at the time was Tim Pharr, who was a carpenter by training. In his oral history interview, Pharr talks about how for a complicated work, Rauschenberg might make him a sketch. He described his role for Rauschenberg as an engineer. He was the carpenter and he was the engineer, and it was his responsibility to make sure that the work was structurally sound. While Tim would build the structure, Peter Wirth, who was a printmaker, would prepare the surfaces—the panels onto which the imagery was transferred. These are called door skins, and they were bought in bulk from a lumber yard. Rauschenberg learned about them from Jim Rosenquist, who said, "I got this great new material, you've got to try it out." And Peter Wirth would prepare them by first sealing the wood, which is about an eighth of an inch thick, using something called matte medium, and then he would apply about three coats of gesso.[8] Once that dried, he'd sand them.

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[6] The original Rauschenberg quote appears in Billy Klüver, *On the Record: Eleven Artists 1963* (New York: Experiments in Art and Technology, 1981) p. 42; reprinted in Billy Klüver and Julie Martin, "Working with Rauschenberg" in *Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective*. Walter Hopps and Susan Davidson, eds. (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1997) p. 311.

[7] Trisha Brown, "Collaboration: Life and Death in the Aesthetic Zone," in Walter Hopps and Susan Davidson, eds., *Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1997) p. 269.

[8] Matte medium is a commercial product that is an acrylic polymer liquid used to decrease gloss and shine and creates a matte, transparent finish. Rauschenberg also used it as an adhesive.

At that point he said the "canvases" were ready, and they would bring them into the print shop, and Rauschenberg would then apply "color." (These are all the terms that they're using.) The fabrics were there for the color, and Rauschenberg would make the selection of fabrics and use matte medium to secure them to the panels.

Apparently, Rauschenberg's process for choosing imagery was that he would get up (not in the morning, but in the afternoon), and he would stand in his kitchen and tear images, text, et cetera, out of magazines and newspapers. Then Bob Peterson, who was his partner at that time and also a printmaker, would collect them and put them into folders in the print studio, arranging them according to category. You'll see again that Rauschenberg goes back repeatedly to certain subjects: transportation, athletes, et cetera.

How did the fabrics get so flat? Although it looks as though the frame is a few inches thick, in fact, the panels are only about an eighth of an inch thick and are under 36 inches wide. So, they could fit through his lithography press, which he had adapted somewhat so that he could then use it not only for making the fabrics very flat, but also for transferring the images onto them. He used something called Roller & Blanket Wash, which is a commercial solvent that's used for printmaking primarily to clean the various parts of the press. He used it "off-brand" as a solvent to transfer the images from his magazine and newspaper sources. That's how it's made.

Inside, you'll see here he has stock pages from the *Miami Herald* and *Fort Myers News*. The dates on the newspaper and magazine sources are from October '76 to September '77. Finding the sources is a way for us to narrow in on when he made the work: we know he didn't make it before September 1977. There are also images from *Sports Illustrated*, with some football players and a baseball, and a lot of cars and references to the environment, which was a big interest. So, pretty common Rauschenberg subjects.

Rauschenberg talked about how he used the newsprint. It's not so much the subject with the newsprint, but he liked the idea that newsprint created yet another surface for him to work on. He said, "I began using newsprint in my work to activate a ground so that even the first strokes in a painting had its own unique position in a gray map of words. As the paintings changed, the printed material became as much of a subject as the paint, causing the changes of focus and providing multiplicity and duplication of images." [9]

He used the mirrors to activate. So how do you fight against the fixedness or stillness of the art object? By reflecting light in the room. But here you'll see that it's also reflecting the adjacent parts of the piece. You can see that there are other colors, and it reflects back the images that he had applied to the surface. So, when he does the transfer, it's in mirror image, but then the mirror below will cast it back to its original orientation. This forward and backwards, also

[9] "How Important Is the Surface to Design? Robert Rauschenberg: An Artist Explains." Print (New York) 13, no. 1 (January–February 1959), p. 31.

activates the piece. As does the addition of the wheels, which he also does on several *Combines* and *Kabal American Zephyrs* in this exhibition.

Trojan Wedge particularly reminded me of the first performance that Rauschenberg choreographed in 1963, called *Pelican*. Rauschenberg was on roller skates. He was not a trained dancer, so one of the ways that he could move better was that he strapped on some roller skates. And on his back, he's wearing a parachute, which is a recurrent Rauschenberg motif. This object in the center of *Trojan Wedge* we know is a small parachute because it's in the instructions made by his studio for how to store and travel this work. In her review of the *Pelican* reprisal at the First New York Theater Rally in May 1965, titled "Daedalus at the Rollerdome," critic Erica Abeel wrote, "In *Pelican*, Rauschenberg breaks down the distinction between the scenic element and the dancer, merging the two in a sort of locomotive human combine."

The last thing I want to talk about is the title, *Trojan Wedge*. Rauschenberg was dyslexic, but he had an incredible facility with words and a love of titling and a love of writing. And he loved double meanings—as many as possible.

For example, *Scales*—the series title—what is referred to? Is it the scale, as in measures, balance, and weight? It may address size or it could be a verb, meaning to climb. Or are the *Scales,* with all their reflective surfaces, like the scales of a fish?

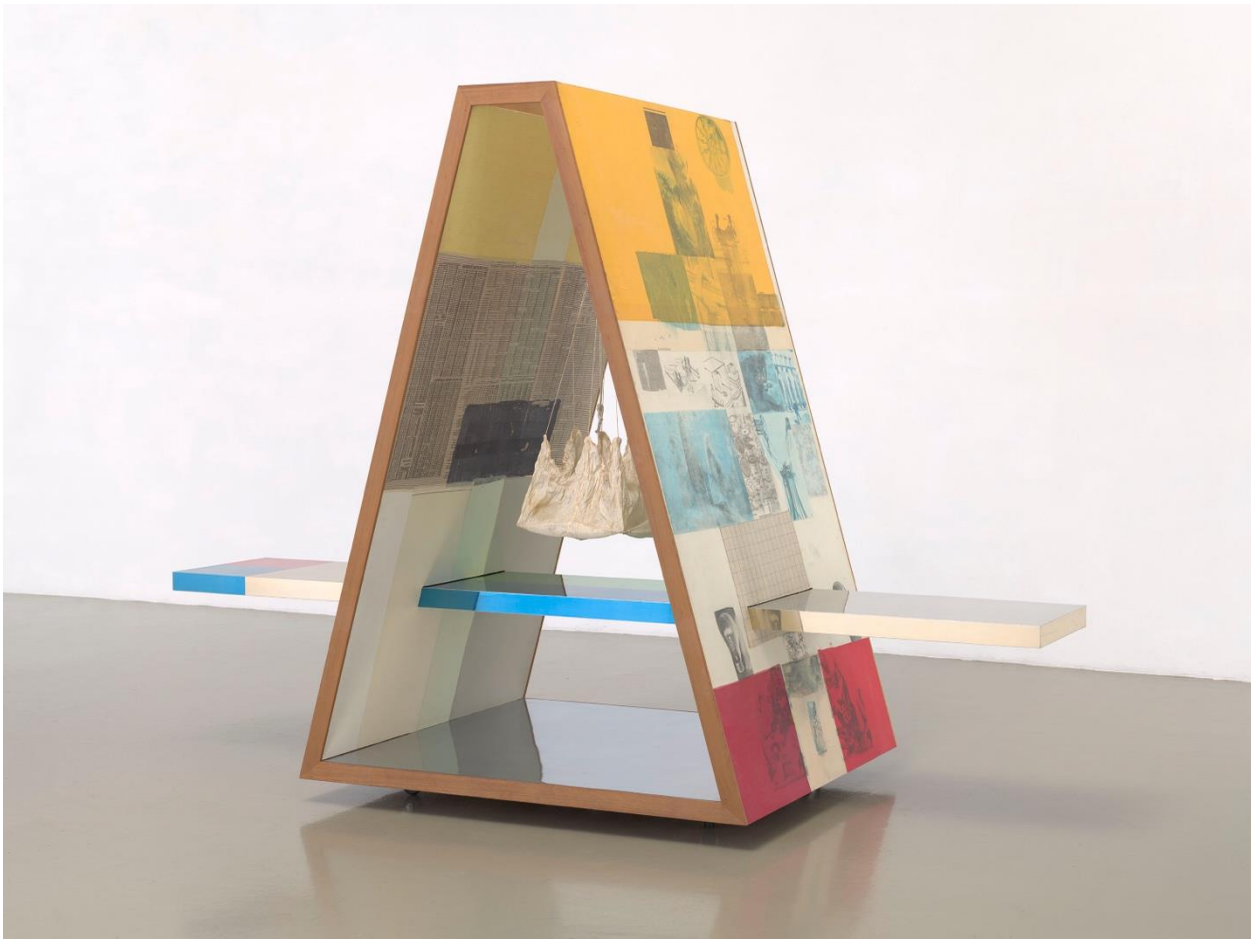
Similarly, *Trojan Wedge* can be understood in multiple ways. And I thought, all right, Trojan, this is the Trojan horse, the wooden construction in which the Greek soldiers hid, that was rolled into Troy. And I thought, okay, well, so that's what it's about. It's the Trojan wedge, referring to the wedge shape of the construction. His penchant for Greek mythology comes through here. It's *Trojan Wedge*, and we have so many works in the exhibition that reference mythology: the *Pail for Ganymede* (1959), *Three Traps for Medea* (1959), and the siren on the *Revolver* (*Revolver V*, 1967).

And then, as I was packing up my bag to get ready to come here the following morning, I was talking to my colleague, Helen Hsu. I said, "Well, what do you think?" And she said, "I always thought it had something to do with Duchamp's *Wedge of Chastity*."

The *Wedge of Chastity* was done in '54. It was shown at MoMA in '73 in a Duchamp retrospective that was curated by Kynaston McShine and Anne D'Harnoncourt.[10] It included two examples of the *Wedge of Chastity*, and of course, who writes for the catalog? It's very

[10] The Rauschenberg text mentioned in later in the paragraph is in *Marcel Duchamp*, Anne d'Harnoncourt and Kynastan McShine, eds. (New York and Philadelphia: The Museum of Modern Art and Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1973), p. 217. *Marcel Duchamp* was shown at the Museum of Modern Art, New York from December 28, 1973 to February 24, 1974.

short what he writes, but none other than Rauschenberg. So maybe it's the *Wedge of Chastity* in which case the Trojan referred to in the title is not the Trojan horse.



Trojan Wedge (Scale), 1977. Solvent transfer, acrylic, fabric, graphite, mirrored panels, plexiglass, cord, and metal, on plywood mounted on four casters. 68 1/4 x 93 x 36 3/4 inches (173.4 x 236.2 x 93.3 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Courtesy of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

VIVIAN LI

Lupe Murchison Curator of Contemporary Art, Dallas Museum of Art, on *Moondragger: East (Japanese Claywork)*, 1982

Rauschenberg's first time in Japan was in 1964 when he was traveling with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. He was the set and costume designer, and it was their very first world tour; they went all over, from Eastern Europe to Delhi, Bombay, Bangkok, and they made three stops in Japan, Tokyo being one of them. At that time, as the costume and set designer, he found it very important, each place he went to, to integrate and learn about the materials in the local community as well. Throughout the rest of his career, he's engaging with the local and international in his own practice.

So, in 1964, he was traveling the world, engaging and absorbing a lot of different cultural influences, as well as inspirations for his own work and thinking. He had won the top prize at the Venice Biennale, which was phenomenal, also controversial at that time. In many ways, it signaled the shift from Paris to New York and the American dominance on the global art stage. So when he came to Tokyo, he was already pretty well known, also because of a very young, important critic, one of the top three critics in post-war Japan, Tono Yoshiaki, who met Rauschenberg in 1959 in New York. Tono was very important for introducing post-war American artists to the Japanese in his writings in important art journals in the early 1950s.

In 1964, Rauschenberg did a four-hour performance in the Sogetsu Art Center, a famous experimental avant-garde art center that invited many international artists. He made, on stage, a *Combine* (*Gold Standard*, 1964), with a golden screen and debris or things he found on the street in Japan.

For Japan, 1964 was very important as well, because it was the first time Japan hosted the Summer Olympics, and it was also the coming-out party for Japan after post-war reconstruction

from the late forties into the fifties. It was economically viable again, it was prospering. So the Japan that Rauschenberg first saw was a very different Japan. And so that was the tension or the excitement that he felt when he first was in Japan in 1964.

[*Moondragger: East*] is actually from about 20 years later, 1982. Rauschenberg had been working in the '60s and '70s with electronics, art, and technology. He approaches the Otsuka Ohmi Ceramics Company. They're a very well-known post-war ceramics company that pride themselves on developing large ceramic tiles—but mostly for construction, not for art. But in the early seventies, during the worldwide oil crisis, the company turned towards art and reproducing, in ceramics, famous works by artists like Picasso, Miró, van Gogh. Today, you can visit the Otsuka Art Museum, west of Osaka. They take pride that they can conserve, or they can create these paintings in ceramics.

Rauschenberg was the very first living artist that they ever collaborated with. This was actually a great challenge for them: they're used to making pretty much ceramic "canvases" [supports] for paintings. They haven't really worked with sculpture before. Already, making large scale tiles, over a meter long, is very hard. Rauschenberg's work itself challenges or blurs between two-dimensional and three-dimensional form. Here also are his own photographs. This one is from Florida, but the others are of Japan, mixing different urban environments. Here also may be a call out to his *Combines* or more three-dimensional works. This creates an interesting spatial challenge as well, where you have this print material overlaid on top of each other.

On the sides, he also includes over-glaze painting on top—his own gestural painting. Here [in the images of plates], you can see this patterning that is very recognizable from the 1600s, Kakiemon export ware from Japan to the rest of the world, mainly to Europe. There are still families that create this design, usually using orange, green, and blue. That's what makes this so recognizable. So [it's] a nod to pre-modern, as well as modern, Japanese ceramics, art, and culture that he's seen or that he's reflecting upon.

The work is like a totem or a figure in a way, and very tall. On the back is also a nod to the ink painting tradition. So he has not only his own painting gestures, but also this more calligraphic treatment of line. Also, there are five characters on the back, written vertically as in the ink painting tradition, that is actually Rauschenberg's name in Japanese characters. When I was first reading it, it literally means "purple smoke desert." Then I realized it's the phonetic reading of his name—Ra yū shi en baku (羅有紫煙莫)— but it [my first reading] colored my looking at this calligraphic ink painting in the back, too. It's very dreamy, surrealist in a way, as well.

The front of the sculpture, especially, draws you in, but each of the sides and the back are also very deliberate—how he is mixing or juxtaposing more pre-modern elements, and acknowledgement of those two painting traditions, and also what he's experiencing in Japan at that time.

Rauschenberg truly believed, in a very optimistic way, that art was a vehicle for cultural exchange and understanding. I think in many ways, he is celebrated as such an American artist or a part of American art history, but he himself saw himself as a visionary [of] his own art in the world.

Moondragger: East (Japanese Claywork), 1982. Transfer and glaze on high-fired ceramic. 78 7/8 x 23 5/8 x 15 7/8 inches (200.4 x 60 x 40.3 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Courtesy of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

CATHERINE CRAFT

Senior Curator, Nasher Sculpture Center, on *Kabal American Zephyrs*, 1981–1985

One of the first series I thought about when the prospect of a Rauschenberg sculpture show came up, was the *Kabal American Zephyrs*. It's well established that the series was inspired by an exhibition Rauschenberg saw in 1980 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, of prints by an artist named Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, *The Bizarre Imagery of Yoshitoshi*.

Yoshitoshi was a Japanese nineteenth-century printmaker, really incredible technically, but he brought together this very baroque, very beautifully colored sense of style and composition with often gruesome and violent imagery. Rauschenberg was very taken with this strange combination, and it's not the first time we see him being inspired by art from other cultures and the way it seemed to have given him a kind of permission to try different things. The initial works in the series often take their titles from individual prints, such as *The Ancient Incident*, which is titled from a series of prints called *Famous Places in the East*, in this case *The Ancient Incident of Umewaka and the Child Seller beside the Sumida River*.

One of the things that strikes me about Yoshitoshi's work is that he illustrated scenes from plays and historical events, but he also illustrated for newspapers—basically, tabloid stories like sex murders or people killing themselves after being caught in embezzling schemes. I found that aspect fascinating because Rauschenberg often defined what he was doing as being a kind of journalist, taking in the world and reporting on what he's finding out there.

This series of sculptures kicks off in '81, and it's in the *Kabal American Zephyrs* that found or salvaged objects on a larger scale re-enter Rauschenberg's work in a way they hadn't really since the *Combines*, and that's not been so carefully considered. Not all the works of the *Kabal American Zephyrs* are composed of salvaged objects; some of them are also made along the

same lines [as] the *Scales* are—they are three-dimensional, freestanding objects that contain transferred imagery. But I wanted to focus on [those with] objects.

When Rauschenberg moved to Captiva in 1970, it wasn't like Lower Manhattan where he could just go outside the door and find a lot of different materials. Eventually he started going to scrap yards, or having assistants do that for him, and amassing material on his property. *The Ancient Incident* is two reproduction chairs, and they are mounted to this dual set of steps. These actually came from a produce seller, where they would put crates of the fruits and vegetables.

Rauschenberg had an assistant who was good with metalworking, Eric Holt. If you look closely, you'll see these chairs are joined by a metal plate, so they just seem to be kind of just touching or kissing. Then, just very lightly, the chairs are pinned to these stepped elements. (Rauschenberg does occasionally have a real taste for symmetry.) It's also this idea of having two chairs facing each other—you think you're going to sit down for a dialogue, but there's not really room for two people to sit and be with each other.

"Kabal American Zephyr" is one of those titles that I have chased around trying to figure out what, if anything, it means. "Kabal" is slightly made up, a kind of play between a cabal, like a plot, and maybe cabalistic symbolism; American, as opposed to the Japanese source of inspiration; as well as a "zephyr," a light westward wind. So I think you take the three words of that series title together, and you have a sense of eastward and westward movement that is at play throughout a number of these sculptures, with a suggestion of a kind of private or secret meaning.

What eventually begins to happen is that Rauschenberg started making up his own titles in the style of Yoshitoshi's prints. So, in the *Petrified Relic of the Gyro Clinic*, I've again been trying to think what on earth could that possibly be. To break it down, there is a crushed steel duct balanced under a typing table. On top is a wheel; we've seen so many wheels in Rauschenberg already today. Then a metal ruler, a straight edge taken across the tabletop, and it's great because the ruler has a hard break where the table leaf drops down, so you can't raise the leaves of the table back up. What I ended up playing around with as an idea behind this title is that there are these things called gyroscopes that are parts of rocket navigation systems. Rauschenberg had been long interested in the space program and did projects with NASA in the late sixties. A gyroscope has wheels within wheels to help with navigation and steering of a spaceship or a rocket, and that seems to me to have some kind of approximation to a world that this sculpture could inhabit. We have another work on wheels that could be positioned around as well as the wheel sitting on top. So, to end the day, another work related to the importance of voyaging and movement for Rauschenberg.

The Ancient Incident (Kabal American Zephyr), 1981. Wood-and-metal stands with wood chairs. 86 5/8 x 93 3/4 x 21 1/4 inches (220 x 238 x 54 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Photo: Kevin Todora

Petrified Relic from the Gyro Clinic (Kabal American Zephyr), 1981. Metal table with metal wheel, rule, and duct. 42 x 19 1/2 x 46 in. (106.7 x 49.5 x 116.8 cm). © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Photo: Kevin Todora

CONTRIBUTORS

Julia Blaut

Julia Blaut is Senior Director of Curatorial Affairs at the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. A graduate of Smith College, the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU, and the Whitney Independent Study Program, Blaut was formerly Assistant Curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, where she worked on Rauschenberg's late career retrospective. She has curated, taught, and published in the field of postwar American art.

Christopher Blay

Christopher Blay is an artist, curator, and writer. He is currently the Director of Public Programs at the National Juneteenth Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, and formerly Chief Curator of the Houston Museum of African American Culture [2021–2024]. Blay is also a contributing writer for *Art in America* magazine and has written for other publications including the *Nasher Magazine*. His curatorial work includes *David-Jeremiah: The Fire This Time*, (Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth, 2025) among others. As a visual artist, Blay's exhibitions include *Elemental Currents, Material, Memory, and Myth*, at Ballroom, Marfa(2025), *Signals and Satellites to the AncesStars* at New Harmony, Indiana (2025), and *East Rosedale Monument Project*, (2025) among others. Blay is a 2003 graduate from Texas Christian University with a BFA in studio art and art history.

Catherine Craft

Catherine Craft is senior curator at the Nasher Sculpture Center, which she joined in 2011. Since her arrival, she has organized the traveling surveys Melvin Edwards: Five Decades (2015) and The Nature of Arp (2018). She was also the curator for the Nasher exhibitions *Rauschenberg Sculpture*; *Roy Lichtenstein in the Studio*, a collaboration with the Dallas Museum of Art; *Samara Golden: if earth is the brain then where is the body* (2024); *Nairy Baghramian: Modèle vivant* (2022), *Magali Reus: A Sentence in Soil* (2022), and *Carol Bove: Collage Sculptures* (2021), among others. She is also the author of *An Audience of Artists: Dada, Neo-Dada, and the Emergence of Abstract Expressionism* (University of Chicago, 2012) and the monographs *Robert Rauschenberg* (2013) and *Jasper Johns* (2009); she recently completed an essay for the first volume of the Rauschenberg catalogue raisonné. A scholar of Dada, Abstract Expressionism, and Neo-Dada, she holds a doctoral degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

Susan Davidson

As an art historian and curator, Susan Davidson has been engaged with Rauschenberg's work since 1990, serving as a curatorial advisor to the artist (2001–08) and as a board member to the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation (2009–2014). Her numerous exhibitions and catalogues on the artist include: *Rauschenberg in China* (Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, 2016); *Robert Rauschenberg: Photographs 1949–1965* (Schimer/Mosel, 2011); *Robert Rauschenberg: Gluts* (Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, 2009); *Rauschenberg: On and Off the Wall* (Musée Contemporain, Nice, France, 2005); *Rauschenberg Gluts* (IVAM, Valencia, Spain, 2005); and *Rauschenberg* (Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara, Italy, 2004). She curated, with Walter Hopps, the definitive *Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective* for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and its international tour (1997–99) and was assistant curator on Hopps's groundbreaking *Robert Rauschenberg: The Early 1950s* (The Menil Collection, Houston, 1991). In addition to Ms. Davidson's extensive writings on Rauschenberg's artwork, she is currently the editor for the Robert Rauschenberg Catalogue Raisonné, Volume One, 1948–53.

Rachel Harrison

Since the early 1990s, Brooklyn-based artist Rachel Harrison has developed a visual language at once citational and abstract, built up of three-dimensional shapes that tempt recognition but exist, in the artist's words, as "forms that can't be described." Across sculpture, photography, video, and drawing, Harrison deploys strategies resonant with, yet independent of, art movements including Neo-Dada, Pop, Minimalism, and Conceptual Art. Her wry use of celebrity imagery and commercial objects suggests what Johanna Burton terms "inappropriation": "not really *taking* a thing so much as acknowledging its multifaceted nature in a world that will shape it and reshape it." Often, Harrison effects the reshaping of herself, lodging familiar images within roguish assemblages of artistic and para-artistic matter, from rope and household tools to polystyrene and cement, the latter materials often painted in vivid colors to forge her distinctive sculptural style. Toying with signs, surfaces, and modes of display, her objects can serve as framing devices—to repurpose Harrison's term for a recent body of work—inviting both semiotic and phenomenological readings without submitting to either mode of interpretation. Circumambulating a Harrison provokes continual cross-referencing and new revelations, with respect not just to the work at hand but to the particular space and viewer it activates.

Vivian Li

Vivian Li is the Lupe Murchison Curator of Contemporary Art at the Dallas Museum of Art. Her research focuses on postwar and contemporary Asian and Asian diasporic artists, often looking at their practices through a global lens. Her recently curated exhibitions include *Matthew Wong: The Realm of Appearances* and *Slip Zone: Abstraction in the Americas and East Asia*. She has also edited and contributed to various publications, including the *Oxford Art Journal, The Brooklyn Rail*, and the anthology *Postwar—A Global Art History, 1945–1965.*

Anna Lovatt

Anna Lovatt is Associate Professor of Art History at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Her book *Drawing Degree Zero: The Line from Minimal to Conceptual Art* was published by Penn State University Press in 2019. In 2025–26 she was the co-curator of *Lines of Resolution: Drawing at the Advent of Television and Video* at the Menil Drawing Institute in Houston.

Claire Taggart

Claire Taggart is the conservator at the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas, Texas. Prior to taking on this role in 2019, she was the Samuel H. Kress Fellow in contemporary art conservation at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, DC. She holds an MS in Art Conservation from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC). Pre-program, Claire interned at the Chinati and Judd Foundations in Marfa, Texas, where she cemented her interest in modern and contemporary art conservation. While a graduate student, Claire enjoyed placements at the Dallas Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Rosa Lowinger & Associates in Miami, Florida, and Tate in London.

IMAGE CREDITS

Page 1—Robert Rauschenberg, *Untitled (Late Kabal American Zephyr)* (detail), 1985. Rubber cycle wheels on metal structure with hand crank. 73 1/2 x 23 5/8 x 16 1/4 inches (186.8 x 60 x 41.3 cm). Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 4—Installation view, *Rauschenberg Sculpture.* Nasher Sculpture Center, 2026. Photo: Kevin Todora

Page 6—*Greenhouse* (detail), 1950. Wire mesh, sticks, wire, twigs, glass orb, glass shards, and paint. 54 x 13 3/4 x 13 3/4 inches (137.3 x 34.9 x 35 cm). Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 9—*Music Box (Elemental Sculpture)* (detail), ca. 1953–58. Wood box, nails, square-cut nails, stones, and feathers. 11 x 7 1/2 x 9 1/4 inches (27.9 x 19.1 x 23.5 cm). Collection of Jasper Johns. ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 19—*Untitled (Early Egyptian)* (detail), 1974. Sand and acrylic on cardboard. 56 1/4 x 106 5/8 x 53 3/4 inches (143 x 270.7 x 136.6 cm). Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 15—*Untitled (Venetian)* (detail), 1973. Tire tread and wood. 38 3/4 x 89 1/8 x 16 1/2 inches (98.5 x 226.5 x 42 cm). Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 22—*Trojan Wedge (Scale)* (detail), 1977. Solvent transfer, acrylic, fabric, graphite, mirrored panels, plexiglass, cord, and metal, on plywood mounted on four casters, with parachute. 68 1/4 x 93 x 36 3/4 inches (173.4 x 236.2 x 93.3 cm). Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 27—*Moondragger: East (Japanese Claywork)* (detail), 1982. Transfer and glaze on high-fired ceramic. 78 7/8 x 23 5/8 x 15 7/8 inches (200.4 x 60 x 40.3 cm). Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 31—*The Brutal Calming of the Waves by Moonlight (Kabal American Zephyr),* 1981. Acrylic on assembled metal parts. 27 x 35 1/2 x 85 inches (68.6 x 90.2 x 215.9 cm). ©Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Page 33—Petrified Relic from the Gyro Clinic (Kabal American Zephyr), 1981. Metal table with metal wheel, rule, and duct. 42 x 19 1/2 x 46 in. (106.7 x 49.5 x 116.8 cm). © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. Photo: Kevin Todora