RRFA 01: Robert Rauschenberg papers
Interviews: Higashino [Tōno], Yoshiaki / “Tying Work to Elephants: About the ROCI Project” / ROCI: Japan [exhibition catalogue], 1983-1990

This fax contains 18 pages including this one. Please notify our office if you did not receive the entire transmission.

DEAR BRADLEY:
Here is the translation of the Tono article from the Japan catalogue. The translator does not use the name "Tono" — instead she uses "Higashino." I don't know if that is his last name or first name or what, but she said that it is the proper translation. Kennial has made corrections by hand on this first copy. They plan to retype the essay with all the corrections included, but for now, here is the initial copy. Let me know if you want a good copy, and I will send it to you after we receive it at our office.

Wendy
Interview: Tying Work to Elephants
About the Rocí Project

Robert Rauschenberg

Yoshiaki Higashino (*Translator’s Note: The surname could also be read as "Tono," but Higashino is the more common reading.)

Introduction

Yoshiaki Higashino

The interview below was done when Rauschenberg came to Japan to make ceramics work in Shigaraki in 1983. This pop art pioneer first came to Japan with John Cage and Merce Cunningham in 1964. At the Sogetsu* Art Center he put on a happening, participated in the Cunningham Group’s dance equipment, costumes, and lighting, and had a great impact on the mid 60s Japanese art community. [*T. N.: Most likely reading of this place name.] After that, he suddenly stopped coming to Japan, but in 1983, he stopped by from a trip to China to do paper work. He started his Shigaraki work, and since then has continued come to Japan time after time. The touring project which he’d already started at this period, the Rocí Show, which is in Japan at this time, is the main subject of this interview. There he steps out of his individual position as a super star of the American art world and we see the face of the late-70s second period Rauschenberg where he dissolves himself in the waves of facing differing cultures of various parts of the world. As a way of contributing even a little to the understanding of this show, I am reprinting this interview. (The interview occurred in Tokyo in May of 1983 and appeared in Iwanami Shoten Publishing’s Time with Creators*. [*T. N.: Official English title not available.] Also, the interview has been abbreviated.)

Higashino: How was China where you went last year (1983)?

Rauschenberg: The tension in China is amazing. From the time I got off the plane until I left the country, there wasn’t the tiniest moment in which I didn’t feel a slow tension. Maybe I could describe it as the kind of tension of tiny drip by drip continuously coming out of a faucet. In other words, there is no freedom of action as we use the word. We met the Governor, the Vice Minister of Culture, and the
Mayor, we were quite lucky. But if you try to do something, even the smallest thing, each action is individually controlled by group. For every ten feet that group moves there is some change (laughs). We were impeccably well behaved, without doing anything extreme. We wanted to stay for some time to do work, and knew that if we did the slightest thing wrong we would be forced to leave the country. What on earth "wrong" was we didn't know, though. We also felt boredom, ennui.

Higashino What was your motive in going to China?

Rauschenberg I had heard about the world's oldest paper mill in Anhui. They say that the paper from there is still the most beautiful. I personally don't know that much about paper quality, my methods of making paper and using it in my works are not traditional, but that paper has a special roughness and flexibility. It is very delicate and it takes ink so well it is surprising.

Higashino There is a lot of your work in the 70s in which you do silkscreen or put hand drawn images on paper that you made yourself, but when did you first start making paper?

Rauschenberg In 1973, in Ambert in the Vichy region of France. I first made paper at a traditional paper mill from the 14th century, but it was two years later when I spent four months in India's Gandhi Ashram Ahmedabad doing sculptural work that the big turning point came. [*T.N.: Official place name spelling not available.]

Higashino That's your "Bones and Adhesion" series from 1975. [*T.N.: Direct translation from Japanese, official English title not available.] In that you wove and pressed paper pulp, fabric, and bamboo, making structural, multiple works of hardened pulp, Indian
mud, worn cloth, plant seeds, etc. Even among your series of works, in this series you combined many un-Western materials and made something unique.

Rauschenberg Yes, I used not only paper but also bamboo, wood, mud, cloth, anything. I couldn't have made that in another place. That's a result of working to open myself to the limit while in the unique conditions of that place. Also, in India, just by wanting it it was easy to get help from people, which was a big luxury. An old couple sitting on the floor would sew with thread, wrap with bamboo, and cut the stem of kite-like paper, they looked as if they'd been squatting doing that for 200 years (laughs).

They had this Indian mud which is wonderful. Have you ever seen an Indian house made of mud? They make Indian mud by mixing cow dung, mud, straw and things; it doesn't last long, but it's very primitive and beautiful. If I made a pot from it, you wouldn't know it from African pots of three thousand years ago, it's that mysterious a material. The other strange thing is that the people working at the Ashram paper mill, because it's such a poor country, make only a dollar a day. It's a big family. They are third generation from Mahatma Gandhi. They are still untouchables.

Higashino Speaking of mud, you made a singular piece called "Mud Muse." There was a large box with mud in it, and the mud was bubbling in reaction to the surrounding noise and soundtrack. That was called "Art and Technology." It was ironic to have that in an ultra-modern exhibition in Los Angeles, wasn't it?

Rauschenberg Oh, that was in 1971. It was the first time I went around the world with Merce Cunningham, and the mud I saw in
India left a strong impression. Everyone works together to build the mud houses in India. It doesn't bother them that the rain washes them away, there are plenty of hands to help, there's lots of cow dung and grass (laughs). They get the whole family together and build it again. But with my work, because Indian mud is so fragile, I had to make a new compound to make it harder. Also, I made very sculptural, structured pieces using materials exclusively available in India, like Egyptian ornamental braid, transparent glue, paper pulp, bamboo, etc. Mold grew, and in the end some really bizarre mushroom-like things grew and the piece became a real masterpiece! Higashino. That's funny. Watching you transfer an image by silkscreen onto this paper that you’ve made with your own hands, it looks as if you are more interested in the base for the image than you are in the image itself, which is different from the past. If you think about it, originally, canvas is a substance made of woven threads. Until now, it's been thought that canvas is an empty space on which something should be expressed. But now, not only with you but also among other recent artists such as France's "Surface/Base Group", rather than the expression on the picture surface, it seems as if there's starting to be more attention paid to the surface or actual base as a material rather than the way it used to be just a place or ground for an image. [* T.N.: Correct French title not available.]

Rauschenberg. That's right, I only used traditional canvases during my middle period when I was printing silkscreens of photos of Kennedy, famous masterpieces, trucks or city scenes. I used thin canvas because I don't like that "permanent" feeling of pictures on
really thick canvas. Using almost transparently thin canvas was good because it almost looked as if the painting was done directly on the wall. It's like the feeling of an amateur ham radio operator.

In the early 50s, near the beginning, I used the wooden boxes thrown out by fish shops and put cloth rolled in mud in them. There was a fish market on Fulton Street where I lived at the time, those boxes really stunk (laughs). For big works I used Conn* Edison Electric Company's big wooden boxes partly because I didn't have any money to buy canvases. It wasn't just an artistic issue. [* T.N.: Correct company spelling not available.]

The piece called "Bed" is done using pillows, sheets, and a bed cover because I didn't have canvas. Whatever was in reach, I painted on whatever I could get, it became a matter of the early me discovering my own surface and execution. Perhaps the direction I took after that is related to this issue.

Higashino That's right, you only kept traditional canvases in one period. In the 70s, you put cardboard boxes and boards together, draped cloth over pulp hardened boards, and in your 1974 series "White Frost," you printed images on thin silk fabric by lithography and simply pinned them to the wall. Your work became like this rather than an "adorned in permanence" canvas stretched on a frame with a stiff surface. [* T.N.: Official English title not available, direct translation.] In other words, rather than a fabricated picture, the expression and the surface melt together within very un-European, soft materials. To put it in an extreme way, more than drawing or printing something on a surface, in other words, you have lost your
interest in the image, and seem to be absorbed in making the
surface, paper, or cloth.

Rauschenberg: You can see the content of a work in the action of
making the materials for expressing something. In other words, the
subject is born from a physical process. It's not just adding an idea
after selecting materials. It's even so with "White Frost." It was very
hot in India, but I didn't want to work in an air conditioned studio,
because all of the wonderful Indian friends who helped me did their
work in fierce heat. Dripping with sweat, the words "White Frost"
float into my mind when I saw the frost in the refrigerator. When
I printed an image on silk, when I blew some solvent on it, things
won't very well with the natural silk, but the image wouldn't stick
with the synthetic fibers. It's easy to see that natural materials
breathe.

This also had an influence on my work methods. I've been to
different parts of the world to work countless times, but I was always
doing the same thing over. I'd ride the plane, arrive at the airport,
ride a taxi, go to a museum or gallery, and do work there, sometimes
sleeping there, have the exhibition, then get in maybe the same taxi
(laughs), and leave from the airport. I got sick of that.

There was the time in Israel when I made the "Cardboard
Series." I'd already been thinking of quitting this repetition, and set a
trap for myself. I used sand with cardboard, and decided to get the
sand from various parts of the desert, so I travelled. Because of this I
saw scenery and things and had a variety of experiences. If I hadn't
done that I would have been stuck in the museum. That's what I
meant by a trap. If one has a split personality, one can set a trap for oneself (laughs).

Higashino That's a bourgeois, avant-garde tragedy, isn't it (laughs). You've gone to Israel, India, China, and... well, Japan is different, but, you've gone and worked right into the middle of cultures with traditions and realities different from those of Europe and America. An avant-garde artist from a capitalist, developed country finds breakthroughs in his own expression and materials in a different culture, a different civilization's reality. This is wonderful, but after all, your finished works go to European, American, Japanese and other developed countries' international modern art world salons, they're praised, evaluated only as a new development for Rauschenberg, bought, and simply end up in a museum collection. Isn't there a contradiction there?

Rauschenberg That's it, that's always a problem. Art should always appeal to a human sense of unease. It's as you say, it's decadence to have it only become a subject of conversation at avant-garde salons. But for example, in Israel, the exact same view and style from ancient times dominates art. To them, art is something which uses jewels and gold, and for me to make my pieces using cardboard was a major culture shock for them. For Israelis, dark memories of war and the hardships of reality are always shadowing them. And yet their art is nothing but conventional traditional work. There was just one woman artist who painted railroad tracks which were badly curved from war, her work was very interesting, but no one thought of her as anything but an insignificant painter. So the works I made in Israel won't be understood by Israelis unless they try to endure
and discover them. It's like thrusting something new in someone's face. There was certainly a group which was converted very quickly, though.

Higashino You're making grand plans for what you're calling the "Rocci Project," aren't you? I've heard that Rocci is the name of a turtle you keep, it's something about being patient, and taking time to come to a realization, like a turtle. I've heard that you're planning not only to take your exhibition of the "Rocci Project" to countries familiar with modern art, but also to tour regions of different cultures like Africa, the Middle East, South America, and China, to create a collision of cultures.

Rauschenberg For example, in Japan we could exhibit the show immediately, but how about Sri Lanka or Morocco? We'd have the show in tents, tie the work to elephants (laughs), look for universities in smaller regions, there would probably be all sorts of problems that we can't even imagine. The concept originated from wanting to try taking my work into regions that have that kind of stance toward accepting my kind of work.

Higashino What kind of work will you take?

Rauschenberg First of all, I don't want to do a retrospective show. Especially the early works, I was poor and sold them all so I don't have them at hand, and I'd have to borrow them from collectors, but I don't like bowing my head to collectors. If they lend to the Metropolitan Museum or the Pompidou Center it raises their reputation, and they're happy to lend them because the price goes up, but if it's a small town in Texas they don't want to lend the work, they don't even care. I have had so many of these experiences, and I
was thinking all along, and at some point started taking specific works and not selling them so I'd have them at hand.

From the 1971 cardboard series we were just talking about up until the work I made yesterday, I have a very large collection of my own. I can construct a show from items selected from that without going to the trouble of borrowing from people, insurance, etc.

Higashino: The grief of popularity (laughs).

Rauschenberg: I don't want to just show an exhibit. I want to make and add works from materials and images of places the exhibit is being shown at, take videos of each place, and show those in other countries. For example, when the "Rocci Project" goes to Mexico, I want to show videos of the lifestyle and the conditions of the exhibit in Egypt. I've been thinking about this since the time of EAT, to try an exchange via video, connecting by video those who have cows but don't know how to make cheese with those who can make cheese but don't have milk.

Societies which aren't sophisticated like Japan or America know absolutely nothing about other parts of the world. I was surprised in China to find that people who have lived in China their whole lives have to get permission just to travel fifteen miles, and this has been going on for centuries. They don't even know everything about their own country. If I use my exhibit to show videos of South America, what would it be like?

Higashino: You won't go to Moscow?

Rauschenberg: It's a very complicated problem there, we're still in the midst of negotiations and haven't properly applied. Originally, Moscow's official answer was "While Reagan is president we can't
have your exhibit." It was a very clear-cut answer (laughs). It seems there's nothing that can be done about it. Beijing is also getting more difficult, but in China I insisted that this project is an event set up between individuals, not between nations.

This is the kind of relationship countries like China need now. They didn't try to hide reality too much. Other than one time when I was stopped by a spy who is always in the town, I was allowed to take photos of anything I wanted.

Higashino The combination of China and Rauschenberg is stimulating. The combination of a giant nation of Asian Socialist realism and American avant-garde. Indeed, if you add Japan in there, it feels a bit like Rauschenberg has created a Security Treaty between Japan, China, and the United States (laughs).

Rauschenberg I think it was good when I first went to China to study how to make paper, because it was one kind of diagonal, indirect relation. But it was also a matter of perfect timing. The rules have become strict again lately, but when I was there, there was an atmosphere of saying that artistic works don't have a need for political slogans on them. When they showed us really beautiful old woodblock prints and silk paintings and had a show of contemporary artists, they say that almost all of the artists were allowed to participate. They also painted over the slogans that were written on the walls, though I couldn't read them, and they used white paint to cover the slogans from the Cultural Revolution written in reddish purple paint. It became beautiful like ancient Etruscan* art (laughs).

[* T.N.: Most likely meaning of reference.] They wouldn't let me take a picture of them painting over it. There's one more thing, this was a
few weeks after we left China. I read it in the paper, it said that there was a re-registration of party members. During the Cultural Revolution, scholars, artists, teachers, and engineers were sent to farms and some of them died there. For a long time, the people that were running the country, especially in the countryside, were illiterate, so now all party members are re-registering, it seems.

They have to reform so many things that it's numbing. I have a very strong sympathy with that aspect of China, therefore, I as a single alien, wanted to go in and boldly show various expressions, ideas, and energy. Being a foreigner is a plus, no one can criticize or ban me. Everyone has a chance to experience my work.

Higashino What's the condition of China's young artists? I read somewhere that a young Chinese guy asked you about Duchamp.

Rauschenberg Yes, I was very surprised by that. Normally I don't give lectures, but the present situation in China is so terrible, that I talked about what's been happening in the American and French art worlds while showing prints that I'd brought. Many great masters as well as young artists came, and someone asked about Duchamp. That reminds me, when I showed a picture of a cow, they knew it was Picasso, but when I told them that pop artist Roy Lichtenstein had used Picasso's picture as a model to make the work, they went crazy. I showed them works ranging from Realism to austere abstracts, and was especially asked about Dada. I made an opening remark saying that I myself had not actually seen Dada and that that it may be better considered a literary movement, by the time I first saw Duchamp, he was already considered a classic like Picasso and Brancusi. Dada's meaning is in the time when they were trying to

11
destroy the Academy, and I talked about how it was born of a
similar movement to rebel against something.

Higashino I heard this from the Pontus Hultén*, once director of
the Pompidou Center. [* T.N. Official spelling not available.] He said
he was walking and looking at young artists in Beijing, he saw a great
artist painting a picture in monochrome, red. When he asked if he
knew the French monochromist Yves Klein, the artist grinned and
answered that the work was a realism piece depicting one part of a
red flag (laughs). Anyway, having interest in Duchamp in China is
something, isn't it.

Rauschenberg I was surprised, too. I hear there are people
sneaking in with books of paintings and other books. Anyway, the
enthusiasm of their curiosity... Without curiosity about the world
individual existence is impossible, without curiosity the world is
featureless.

Higashino Yes, curiosity is what rebellion against oneself is born
from.

Rauschenberg In fields other than art, curiosity has come to be
used as a weapon. Art is the last really vital occupation because,
moreover, the world has sincerity, individual strength and will.
Before, I though sports also had that, but seeing the trouble at the
latest Olympics, it's unfortunate, but the athletes are being used as
tools for politicians. That's also why they participate in the Los
Angeles Olympics but back out on plans for art events. My art was
always directed towards communication more than self expression.

The work I make in each specific country can be nothing else
than a mixture of my American energy and each country's reality. I
want to use my energy to translate those countries' special cultures and things internal to that reality so that I can see them with my own eyes. The people of those countries should be able to grasp a new method of seeing the world around them.

Higashino Do you really believe that you will be able to create communication there?

Rauschenberg Of course. Especially when we were making ceramic boards in Shigaraki for example, I worked together with on-site experts from the Otsuka Omi Company, and we experimented with absurd things together, doing things they'd never even thought of so far in their work with ceramics. That's where the hierarchy disappears, when a superior confers with a novice, sometimes a novice comes up with an amazing idea. In this kind of place, there was already communication.

Higashino To speak of your work, the idea of combination painting is the base. In other words, you take photos from magazines, your own photos, everyday objects — these may be world topics, everyday things of no great importance, or even trash, but you take those and like a page of a newspaper, combine in a sense items with unrelated relatedness on a surface. This is the world's ambiguity, or its diversity...

Rauschenberg That includes simultaneity and contradictoriness.

Higashino Yes, I think your pictures reflect the outer layer of that world's ambiguity and diversity. How do you select the images and objects you are going to combine on a picture surface? Is it by the interestingness of the images, language based, or instinctual?
Rauschenberg It's instinct. Yet at the same time, sometimes
selection is counterattacked by reality or things. Ambiguity is a good
word. Things just laying around also have traces of catastrophic
experiences left on them. You look at that and think what is that, and
then what isn't it? You have to think twice. I don't think about
harmony and modeling in my work. If an image or object on the
surface looks without a doubt like it should be in that location, I
don't use it. Also, if a piece's color combination looks too good, I
purposely go in and ruin it.

Higashino It's like a newspaper in that mutually irrelevant articles
and photographs are lined up side by side. My ten year old daughter
doesn't like newspapers. They're full of bad news like murders and
disasters. They only print good news when there isn't any bad news.
That's what she says she doesn't like. Newspaper pages are always
the same, so when there's a lot of news, big issues only get a little
coverage. My daughter insists that when there's no news, they
should leave the paper white. When there's a newspaper holiday, she
says "Oh, nothing happened," and acts relieved (laughs).

Rauschenberg You shouldn't show her my article that ran in
Newsweek last week (laughs). When there's composition in my work,
I don't use relativeness as a reason, but rather to emphasize that
facts exist without relation. By doing that, when you see that work
for example, you'll come up with some kind of relationship in your
mind, right? That should be completely different from the
relationship that someone else comes up with in their mind. These
various differing reactions are what lengthen the life of a work. With
newspapers, once you've read them, that's the end. However, when
reading my work, information is abstracted and disharmonized, and sometimes you see things you wouldn't have imagined the day before. And someday, there may come a time when you understand everything about an ambiguous picture. If that happens, fine art becomes merely a symbol. To lengthen the time before that happens as much as possible, I want to keep pictures very complex or very simple, though they're the same thing.

Higashino When I saw the ceramic board Mud Shrine you made at Shigaraki this time, I really understood the sumo doll you printed on the ceramic board, but the strange Roman ruins type image was mysterious. Then I heard that it was nothing but a photograph of steps rotated 90°. With your way of combining things, one person or one country sees a work as very exotic, while others see it differently, as something everyday. A picture is actually not homogeneous and uniform, depending on the person who looks at it, the receding parts and projecting parts are each seen as interwoven.

Rauschenberg But another answer is born from the connection between exotic and kitsch. In logic, we are taught that bananas can't be added to apples, but here we can do that! (Laughs.)

Higashino I understand well that you want to make your work ambiguous in the way that the world is diverse.

Rauschenberg That's right, in a provocative way. My work is also definitely not simply my own memory chain. Of the photographic work I'm doing now there's a piece called "In and Out City Limits." I go to a city, spend a few days there, and take thousands of photos. I'm not there to get to know the city well or to comment on it or criticize it, I simply want to experience the city by moving from the
city's shadows to the light. Then I go back to New York and select eighty photos, then I go back to that city and do a photo exhibit with those photos. When I do that, the reaction of the people who come to see it is graphic. Things they are used to seeing, things that are always in front of their eyes but they don't see, things they've never seen, an obscure place that only they know — with each of these they rediscover their own city. I go to the next city and do the same thing. I'm planning to make these photos into a book and publish it soon.

Higashino One more thing, I heard that you have plans for a big project called "1/4 Mile." 1/4 mile, a length of 400 meters...

Rauschenberg This is also, in a sense, another device for experiment, a way to try to make my own work an adventure. It's impossible to conceive of "1/4 Mile" from end to end. By putting a certain amount of time into certain works, somewhere my own aesthetic will end up tightening up, but here's where there's no way to have presuppositions or preconceptions. It's like when I did the ceramic board in Japan, I was surrounded by ceramic experts, at first I was intimidated since I was empty handed and ignorant.

But actually, ignorance sometimes helps make exceptional work. There are too many artists who know precisely what they're doing. Those are the scariest artists. Anyway, when this work is finished, I probably won't even remember what the work was like for me when it started.

Higashino After all, in this large work you'll be combining various places of the world, human images, and objects, right?

Rauschenberg That's right. I've just started, and I also went to China and Japan, so I don't know what's going to happen. Also, this
work won't be shown as one solid piece in one place, there's not really a way to exhibit it. I plan to have it spread out in separate parts in various places. For example, starting from 381 Broadway and ending uptown, or by not being able to see the end without going to another city. Viewers will be given a map and travel, moving from piece to piece. That movement will become one part of the work, so actually it will be a piece that is much longer than 1/4 mile. And by the time you get to the end, you'll forget what was at the beginning, so you could see the work time after time (laughs).

Captions:

p. 2
"Untitled" (White Frost) 1974
p. 4
"Tanshin" (out of seven Chinese characters) 1982
p. 5
"Mud Shrine" 1982
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Introduction

Yoshiaki Tono

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Mayor, we were quite lucky. But if you try to do something, even the smallest thing, each action is individually controlled by group. For every ten feet that group moves there is some change (laughs). We were impeccably well behaved, without doing anything extreme. We wanted to stay for some time to do work, and knew that if we did the slightest thing wrong we would be forced to leave the country. What on earth "wrong" was we didn't know, though. We also felt boredom, ennui.

**Tono** What was your motive in going to China?

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**Rauschenberg** In 1973, in Ambert in the Vichy region of France. I first made paper at a traditional paper mill from the 14th century, but it was two years later when I spent four months in India's Gandhi Ashram Omnibad* doing sculptural work that the big turning point came. [*T.N.: Official place name spelling not available.]*

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Tono  Speaking of mud, you made a singular piece called "Mud Muse." There was a large box with mud in it, and the mud was bubbling in reaction to the surrounding noise and soundtrack. That was called "Art and Technology." It was ironic to have that in an ultra-modern exhibition in Los Angeles, wasn’t it?

Rauschenberg  Oh, that was in 1971. It was the first time I went around the world with Merce Cunningham, and the mud I saw in
India left a strong impression. Everyone works together to build the mud houses in India, it doesn’t bother them that the rain washes them away, there are plenty of hands to help, there’s lots of cow dung and grass (laughs). They get the whole family together and build it again. But with my work, because Indian mud is so fragile, I had to make a new compound to make it harder. Also, I made very sculptural, structured pieces using materials exclusively available in India, like Egyptian ornamental braid, transparent glue, paper pulp, bamboo, etc. Mold grew, and in the end some really bizarre mushroom-like things grew and the piece became a real masterpiece!

Tono That’s funny. Watching you transfer an image by silkscreen onto this paper that you’ve made with your own hands, it looks as if you are more interested in the base for the image than you are in the image itself, which is different from the past. If you think about it, originally, canvas is a substance made of woven threads. Until now, it’s been thought that canvas is an empty space on which something should be expressed. But now, not only with you but also among other recent artists such as France’s "Surface/Base Group"*, rather than the expression on the picture surface, it seems as if there’s starting to be more attention paid to the surface or actual base as a material rather than the way it used to be just a place or ground for an image. [* T.N.: Correct French title not available.]

Rauschenberg That’s right, I only used traditional canvases during my middle period when I was printing silkscreens of photos of Kennedy, famous masterpieces, trucks or city scenes. I used thin canvas because I don’t like that "permanent" feeling of pictures on really thick canvas. Using almost transparently thin canvas was good
because it almost looked as if the painting was done directly on the wall. It's like the feeling of an amateur Ham radio operator.

In the early 50s, near the beginning, I used the wooden boxes thrown out by fish shops and put cloth rolled in mud in them. There was a fish market on Fulton Street where I lived at the time, those boxes really stunk (laughs). For big works I used Conn Edison Electric Company's big wooden boxes partly because I didn't have any money to buy canvases, it wasn't just an artistic issue.

The piece called "Bed" is done using pillows, sheets, and a bed cover because I didn't have canvas. Whatever was in reach, I painted on whatever I could get, it became a matter of the early me discovering my own surface and execution. Perhaps the direction I took after that is related to this issue.

Tono That's right, you only kept traditional canvases in one period. In the 70s, you put cardboard boxes and boards together, draped cloth over pulp hardened boards, and in your 1974 series "Hoarfrost," you printed images on thin silk fabric by lithography and simply pinned them to the wall. Your work became like this rather than an "adorned in permanence" canvas stretched on a frame with a stiff surface. In other words, rather than a fabricated picture, the expression and the surface melt together within very un-European, soft materials. To put it in an extreme way, more than drawing or printing something on a surface, in other words, you have lost your interest in the image, and seem to be absorbed in making the surface, paper, or cloth.

Rauschenberg You can see the content of a work in the action of making the materials for expressing something. In other words, the
subject is born from a physical process, it's not just adding an idea after selecting materials. It's even so with "Hoarfrost." It was very hot in India, but I didn't want to work in an air conditioned studio, because all of the wonderful Indian friends who helped me did their work in fierce heat. Dripping with sweat, the words "Hoarfrost" floated into my mind when I saw the frost in the refrigerator. When I printed an image on silk, when I blew some solvent on it, things went very well with the natural silk, but the image wouldn't stick with the synthetic fibers. It's easy to see that natural materials breathe.

This also had an influence on my work methods. I've been to various parts of the world to work countless times, but I was always doing the same thing over. I'd ride the plane, arrive at the airport, ride a taxi, go to a museum or gallery, and do work there, sometimes sleeping there, have the exhibition, then get in maybe the same taxi (laughs), and leave from the airport. I got sick of that.

There was the time in Israel when I made the "Cardboard Series." I'd already been thinking of quitting this repetition, and set a trap for myself. I used sand with cardboard, and decided to get the sand from various parts of the desert, so I travelled. Because of this I saw scenery and things and had a variety of experiences. If I hadn't done that I would have been stuck in the museum. That's what I meant by a trap. If one has a split personality, one can set a trap for oneself (laughs).

Tono That's a bourgeois, avant-garde tragedy, isn't it (laughs).
You've gone to Israel, India, China, and ... well, Japan is different, but, you've gone and worked right into the middle of cultures with
traditions and realities different from those of Europe and America. An avant-garde artist from a capitalist, developed country finds breakthroughs in his own expression and materials in a different culture, a different civilization’s reality. This is wonderful, but after all, your finished works go to European, American, Japanese and other developed countries’ international modern art world salons, they’re praised, evaluated only as a new development for Rauschenberg, bought, and simply end up in a museum collection. Isn’t there a contradiction there?

**Rauschenberg** That’s it, that’s always a problem. Art should always appeal to a human sense of unease. It’s as you say, it’s decadence to have it only become a subject of conversation at avant-garde salons. But for example, in Israel, the exact same view and style from ancient times dominates art. To them, art is something which uses jewels and gold, and for me to make my pieces using cardboard was a major culture shock for them. For Israelis, dark memories of war and the hardships of reality are always shadowing them. And yet their art is nothing but conventional traditional work. There was just one woman artist who painted railroad tracks which were badly curved from war, her work was very interesting, but no one thought of her as anything but an insignificant painter. So the works I made in Israel won’t be understood by Israelis unless they try to endure and discover them, it’s like thrusting something new in someone’s face. There was certainly a group which was converted very quickly, though.

**Tono** You’re making grand plans for what you’re calling the "ROCI Project," aren’t you? I’ve heard that ROCI is the name of a turtle you
keep, it's something about being patient, and taking time to come to a realization, like a turtle. I've heard that you're planning not only to take your exhibition of the "ROCI Project" to countries familiar with modern art, but also to tour regions of different cultures like Africa, the Middle East, South America, and China, to create a collision of cultures.

Rauschenberg For example, in Japan we could exhibit the show immediately, but how about Sri Lanka or Morocco? We'd have the show in tents, tie the work to elephants (laughs), look for universities in smaller regions, there would probably be all sorts of problems that we can't even imagine. The concept originated from wanting to try taking my work into regions that have that kind of stance toward accepting my kind of work.

Tono What kind of work will you take?

Rauschenberg First of all, I don't want to do a retrospective show. Especially the early works, I was poor and sold them all so I don't have them at hand, and I'd have to borrow them from collectors, but I don't like bowing my head to collectors. If they lend to the Metropolitan Museum or the Pompidou Center it raises their reputation, and they're happy to lend them because the price goes up, but if it's a small town in Texas they don't want to lend the work, they don't even care. I have had so many of these experiences, and I was thinking all along, and at some point started taking specific works and not selling them so I'd have them at hand.

From the 1971 cardboard series we were just talking about up until the work I made yesterday, I have a very large collection of my
own. I can construct a show from items selected from that without going to the trouble of borrowing from people, insurance, etc.

**Tono** The grief of popularity (laughs).

**Rauschenberg** I don't want to just show an exhibit. I want to make and add works from materials and images of the place the exhibit is being shown at, take videos of each place, and show those in other countries. For example, when the "ROCI Project" goes to Mexico, I want to show videos of the lifestyle and the conditions of the exhibit in Egypt. I've been thinking about this since the time of EAT, to try an exchange via video, connecting by video those who have cows but don't know how to make cheese with those who can make cheese but don't have milk.

Societies which aren't sophisticated like Japan or America know absolutely nothing about other parts of the world. I was surprised in China to find that people who have lived in China their whole lives have to get permission just to travel fifteen miles, and this has been going on for centuries. They don't even know everything about their own country. If I use my exhibit to show videos of South America, what would it be like?

**Tono** You won't go to Moscow?

**Rauschenberg** It's a very complicated problem there, we're still in the midst of negotiations and haven't properly applied. Originally, Moscow's official answer was "While Reagan is president we can't have your exhibit." It was a very clear-cut answer (laughs). It seems there's nothing that can be done about it. Beijing is also getting more difficult, but in China I insisted that this project is an event set up between individuals, not between nations.
This is the kind of relationship countries like China need now. They didn't try to hide reality too much. Other than one time when I was stopped by a spy who is always in the town, I was allowed to take photos of anything I wanted.

**Tono** The combination of China and Rauschenberg is stimulating. The combination of a giant nation of Asian Socialist realism and American avant-garde. Indeed, if you add Japan in there, it feels a bit like Rauschenberg has created a Security Treaty between Japan, China, and the United States (laughs).

**Rauschenberg** I think it was good when I first went to China to study how to make paper, because it was one kind of diagonal, indirect relation. But it was also a matter of perfect timing. The rules have become strict again lately, but when I was there, there was an atmosphere of saying that artistic works don't have a need for political slogans on them. When they showed us really beautiful old woodblock prints and silk paintings and had a show of contemporary artists, they say that almost all of the artists were allowed to participate. They also painted over the slogans that were written on the walls, though I couldn't read them, and they used white paint to cover the slogans from the Cultural Revolution written in reddish purple paint. It became beautiful like ancient Etruscan* art (laughs). [* T.N.: Most likely meaning of reference.] They wouldn't let me take a picture of them painting over it. There's one more thing, this was a few weeks after we left China. I read it in the paper, it said that there was a re-registration of party members. During the Cultural Revolution, scholars, artists, teachers, and engineers were sent to farms and some of them died there. For a long time, the people that
were running the country, especially in the countryside, were illiterates, so now all party members are re-registering, it seems. They have to reform so many things that it's numbing. I have a very strong sympathy with that aspect of China, therefore, I as a single alien, wanted to go in and boldly show various expressions, ideas, and energy. Being a foreigner is a plus, no one can criticize or ban me. Everyone has a chance to experience my work.

Tono  What's the condition of China's young artists? I read somewhere that a young Chinese guy asked you about Duchamp.

Rauschenberg  Yes, I was very surprised by that. Normally I don't give lectures, but the present situation in China is so terrible, that I talked about what's been happening in the American and French art worlds while showing prints that I'd brought. Many great masters as well as young artists came, and someone asked about Duchamp. That reminds me, when I showed a picture of a cow, they knew it was Picasso, but when I told them that pop artist Roy Lichtenstein had used Picasso's picture as a model to make the work, they went crazy. I showed them works ranging from Realism to austere abstracts, and was especially asked about Dada. I made an opening remark saying that I myself had not actually seen Dada and that that it may be better considered a literary movement, by the time I first saw Duchamp, he was already considered a classic like Picasso and Brancusi. Dada's meaning is in the time when they were trying to destroy the Academy, and I talked about how it was born of a similar movement to rebel against something.

Tono  I heard this from the Pontus Hulten, once director of the Pompidou Center. He said he was walking and looking at young
artists in Beijing, he saw a great artist painting a picture in monochrome, red. When he asked if he knew the French monochromist Yves Klein, the artist grinned and answered that the work was a realism piece depicting one part of a red flag (laughs). Anyway, having interest in Duchamp in China is something, isn’t it. 

Rauschenberg I was surprised, too. I hear there are people sneaking in with books of paintings and other books. Anyway, the enthusiasm of their curiosity... Without curiosity about the world individual existence is impossible, without curiosity the world is featureless.

Tono Yes, curiosity is what rebellion against oneself is born from. 

Rauschenberg In fields other than art, curiosity has come to be used as a weapon. Art is the last really vital occupation because, moreover, the world has sincerity, individual strength and will. Before, I thought sports also had that, but seeing the trouble at the latest Olympics, it’s unfortunate, but the athletes are being used as tools for politicians. That’s also why they participate in the Los Angeles Olympics but back out on plans for art events. My art was always directed towards communication more than self expression.

The work I make in each specific country can be nothing else than a mixture of my American energy and each country’s reality. I want to use my energy to translate those countries’ special cultures and things internal to that reality so that I can see them with my own eyes. The people of those countries should be able to grasp a new method of seeing the world around them. 

Tono Do you really believe that you will be able to create communication there?
Rauschenberg  Of course. Especially when we were making ceramic boards in Shigaraki for example, I worked together with on-site experts from the Otsuka Omi Company, and we experimented with absurd things together, doing things they'd never even thought of so far in their work with ceramics. That's where the hierarchy disappears, when a superior confers with a novice, sometimes a novice comes up with an amazing idea. In this kind of place, there was already communication.

Tono  To speak of your work, the idea of combination painting is the base. In other words, you take photos from magazines, your own photos, everyday objects — these may be world topics, everyday things of no great importance, or even trash, but you take those and like a page of a newspaper, combine in a sense items with unrelated relatedness on a surface. This is the world's ambiguity, or its diversity...

Rauschenberg  That includes simultaneity and contradictoriness.

Tono  Yes, I think your pictures reflect the outer layer of that world's ambiguity and diversity. How do you select the images and objects you are going to combine on a picture surface? Is it by the interestingness of the images, language based, or instinctual?

Rauschenberg  It's instinct. Yet at the same time, sometimes selection is counterattacked by reality or things. Ambiguity is a good word. Things just laying around also have traces of catastrophic experiences left on them. You look at that and think what is that, and then what isn't it? You have to think twice. I don't think about harmony and modeling in my work. If an image or object on the surface looks without a doubt like it should be in that location, I
don't use it. Also, if a piece's color combination looks too good, I purposely go in and ruin it.

**Tono**  It's like a newspaper in that mutually irrelevant articles and photographs are lined up side by side. My ten year old daughter doesn't like newspapers. They're full of bad news like murders and disasters. They only print good news when there isn't any bad news. That's what she says she doesn't like. Newspaper pages are always the same, so when there's a lot of news, big issues only get a little coverage. My daughter insists that when there's no news, they should leave the paper white. When there's a newspaper holiday, she says "Oh, nothing happened," and acts relieved (laughs).

**Rauschenberg**  You shouldn't show her my article that ran in *Newsweek* last week (laughs). When there's composition in my work, I don't use relativeness as a reason, but rather to emphasize that facts exist without relation. By doing that, when you see that work for example, you'll come up with some kind of relationship in your mind, right? That should be completely different from the relationship that someone else comes up with in their mind. These various differing reactions are what lengthen the life of a work. With newspapers, once you've read them, that's the end. However, when reading my work, information is abstracted and disharmonized, and sometimes you see things you wouldn't have imagined the day before. And someday, there may come a time when you understand everything about an ambiguous picture. If that happens, fine art becomes merely a symbol. To lengthen the time before that happens as much as possible, I want to keep pictures very complex or very simple, though they're the same thing.
Tono  When I saw the ceramic board Mud Shrine you made at Shigaraki this time, I really understood the sumo doll you printed on the ceramic board, but the strange Roman ruins type image was mysterious. Then I heard that it was nothing but a photograph of steps rotated 90°. With your way of combining things, one person or one country sees a work as very exotic, while others see it differently, as something everyday. A picture is actually not homogeneous and uniform, depending on the person who looks at it, the receding parts and projecting parts are each seen as interwoven.  
Rauschenberg  But another answer is born from the connection between exotic and kitsch. In logic, we are taught that bananas can’t be added to apples, but here we can do that! (Laughs.)  
Tono  I understand well that you want to make your work ambiguous in the way that the world is diverse.  
Rauschenberg  That’s right, in a provocative way. My work is also definitely not simply my own memory chain. Of the photographic work I’m doing now there’s a piece called "In and Out City Limits." I go to a city, spend a few days there, and take thousands of photos. I’m not there to get to know the city well or to comment on it or criticize it. I simply want to experience the city by moving from the city’s shadows to the light. Then I go back to New York and select eighty photos, then I go back to that city and do a photo exhibit with those photos. When I do that, the reaction of the people who come to see it is graphic. Things they are used to seeing, things that are always in front of their eyes but they don’t see, things they’ve never seen, an obscure place that only they know — with each of these they
rediscover their own city. I go to the next city and do the same thing. I’m planning to make these photos into a book and publish it soon.

Tono One more thing. I heard that you have plans for a big project called "1/4 Mile." 1/4 mile, a length of 400 meters...

Rauschenberg This is also, in a sense, another device for experiment, a way to try to make my own work an adventure. It’s impossible to conceive of "1/4 Mile" from end to end. By putting a certain amount of time into certain works, somewhere my own aesthetic will end up tightening up, but here’s where there’s no way to have presuppositions or preconceptions. It’s like when I did the ceramic board in Japan, I was surrounded by ceramic experts, at first I was intimidated since I was empty handed and ignorant.

But actually, ignorance sometimes helps make exceptional work. There are too many artists who know precisely what they’re doing. Those are the scariest artists. Anyway, when this work is finished, I probably won’t even remember what the work was like for me when it started.

Tono After all, in this large work you’ll be combining various places of the world, human images, and objects, right?

Rauschenberg That’s right. I’ve just started, and I also went to China and Japan, so I don’t know what’s going to happen. Also, this work won’t be shown as one solid piece in one place, there’s not really a way to exhibit it. I plan to have it spread out in separate parts in various places. For example, starting from 381 Broadway and ending uptown, or by not being able to see the end without going to another city. Viewers will be given a map and travel, moving from piece to piece. That movement will become one part of the work, so
actually it will be a piece that is much longer than 1/4 mile. And by the time you get to the end, you'll forget what was at the beginning, so you could see the work time after time (laughs).

Captions:

p. 2
"Untitled" (Hoarfrost) 1974
p. 4
"Tanshin" (out of seven Chinese characters) 1982
p. 5
"Mud Shrine" 1982
 Essays # 2
対談：象に作品をくくりつけたり……
——ロッキー・プロジェクトを巡って

ロバート・ラウシェンバーグ
東野芳明

まえがき

以下の対談は、ラウシェンバーグが1983年、信楽でラムネックの作品を作るために来日した際に行われたものである。このボッケ・アートの先駆者は1964年にジョン・ウェグ、マーラー・カニン・ダムらとまじえて来日し、当時の草月ללルート・モーリンでハ・ブリングを開始した。カニン・ダム・ブリングのブリングの機械や家具に現れた上、60年代末の日本の美術界に大きなインパクトを与えた。その後、もとより来日しなくなったが1983年に中国でラムネックを訪れた帰国立ち寄ってから、彼の仕事ははじめ、また速くに日本に何度も来るようになった。今回日本でも展開したラフキー展の巡礼プロジェクトは、すでにこの年の初めで、この対談も、このプロジェクトが話題の中心になっている。そこには、アメリカ美術界のスーパースターという個人の立場を脱して、世界の広い視覚文化の動きの中で、物を解釈しようとという、70年代後半からの、第二期のラウシェンバーグの軽がある。不条理にいかがでも研究する、この対談を再構築して読んだ。（対談は1983年5月に東京で行われ、芸術書店の談話「手作り手作りの時間」に収録してある。以下、一部を省略したことを付け加えさせていただきます。）

東野　昨年（1983）を行ったという中国はどうでした。

ラウシェンバーグ　中国での緊張感というのはすごい。飛行機で
降りてから出国するまで、一瞬たるとも、あの、じっとゆっくり
とした緊張を感じないことはなかった。水道の蛇口から、ほんの
少ししか水が出たほどと出づけているときに感じる緊張感、と
でもいうか。つまり中国はわれわれがいう意味での行動の自由
がない。ぼくは知事や文化副大臣とかセミナーにも会ったり、ずい
分と見られた。けれども、だから諦めるとか、ほんのほんの
さいなことのひとつひとつと、それぞれ、別のグループに管理
されていて、そのグループが、10フィートくらいに見えるんだっ
（笑）。ぼくはきわめて品行方正だった。過激な振舞いはいっつ
きもない。潜むして仕事をしたのだが、ちょっとでも悪いこと
をしたから国内を名を汚すことわざを分かっていたからね。もっとも、
一体全体、何が“悪い”ことなのかもちろんなかったけどね。それ
と、あの、いったらした他他意もちょっとしたものだった。

東野　中国に行った動機はなんだったのですか。

ラウシェンバーグ　世界巡業という安保の装置工場の話を聞いた
のがきっかけ。あそこの話をいまでもいちばん美しい作品だという
んだ。自作は自作の美美のことはよく分かっていないし、自分が作っ
た作品にするようには、伝統的なやり方はないけど、⊂も⊂く
と、その作品がちょっと腦の柔らかいこと、インクの問合せが
ふれると、どうデッケートなんだ。

東野　70年代の君の作品には、自分では作品の上にシルクスクリ
ーンや手描きでイメージを置いたものが多いけど、最初はどこか
で原をやったのか。

ラウシェンバーグ　1973年。フランスのヴィシー地方のアンペ
ル。14世紀からの伝統のある紙工場で、ただの人がたした、ほんの2
年あたえ、インドのガパンディ・アシュラムのオム
ニバードで4ヶ月、形的な仕事をしたときで大きな保持だった。

東野　75年「骨と群市」というシリーズですね。あれは、紙の
パルプに市の竹の竹を濁してプレスしたり、パルプやインド泥
やぼろ布や植物の種などを使ってもいた構成的なアソーシブ作品で、君の作品系列では非欧系の素材を生みにコン
バインした黄色のものだった。

ラウシェンバーグ　そう、紙だけではなく、竹、木、布、な
んでも使ったんだ。これは他の土地では作れなかった。あの土地独
立の条件に出来ず自分を開いているとに疲れた結果です。そ
れにインドでは、欲しいだけ、人々の好きな小さい箱作りが出来
たというのは、大変なことだった。末期に生活をした人たちは
絵で絵を、竹で包んだり、風向きと紙の紙を切ってこ
られる。それが、200年も昔からうまく運んでまきやっているように
見えるんだ（笑）。

インド泥というのもあったよ。これがすばらしい。泥で作った
インドの産を見たことがないか？インド泥は牛さんかの糞や
泥や麦藁やなんかを混ぜて作るんで、永久持たないんだが、す
ぐくプリミティブで美しい。これで施用したら千年前のアフ
リカの土といったって分かりじゃない、そんなに不思議な材料
だね。それに不思議なもの、アシュラムの紙工場が働いている
東野 　いまは、โพーリオ Nerinaという奇妙な作品を作ったでしょう。彼が入れた大きな箱があり、まるで顔の顔やサウンドトラックの音に反応して箱が破れていく。ちなみに「アルト・アンド・テクノロジー」という、イスズアンゼルスの超現代的な展示会に出展されたのは同じだ。

ラウシェンバーグ 　あ、それは1971年から、はじめめてマース・カニングハムのダンスと世界が一体となったときにインデで見たことがある。ダンスの世界というかインデに見Commercialized products and services...are all over the place, but those are not the ones that make the world go around.
イスラエルとかインドとか中国とかへ行って、まあ日本は別だろうけど、ヨーロッパやアメリカの文化はたちがり文化的な伝統とか現実のただ中で仕事をする資本主義先進国の前衛作者が、異文化、異文明の現実から自分の新しい作品や素材の突入を考えてみようとする——それは自らの新しいものなんだ。結局、そうして出来た作品の作者は、ヨーロッパ、アメリカ、日本といった先進国の国際現代美術のサーキットで、あまりされず、ラウェンバーグの新しい展覧会としてだけ評価され、買い手、美術館のコレクションに入るだけになる。そういうにことが俺を悩ませますね。

ラウェンバーグ それなんだ、それがいつも問題なんだ。芸術ということは、いつも、人間の不安さ訴えかけるものなんだ。それが、君のいる通産、ブルジョア、アヴァンギャルドのサーキットでただ話題になるのはデカダンスマにちがいない。しかしけ、たとえばイスラエルはイスラエルで、芸術に対しては、昔からちょっと変わらない建物とスタジオがはっきりしている。彼らには、美術という、宝石とか金とかを使っても、ダンボールを使ってばくが作品を作れる、大規模なギャラリーをもったことになる。イスラエル人には、数が増えている美術の実現に、秘密そのものがつまっている。そうすると、美術という、きれぎりぎりの現実そのものを作る。ひたけ、戦争を始ますぐにひこん曲った鉄道線を描いた女性の画家がいて、とても面白かったんだ。それでも彼女にいる画家としか思っていなかった。だから、ぼくがイスラエルで作った作品は、イスラエル人が貰って見せたくなかった。何かのものにつきついたことになる。

東野 それは、それにじめじめ古いに残されたものかもしれない。

ラウェンバーグ あそこは問題が複雑だね、まだ手続きをちょっとやっていないのでやと見ている中でですね。もっとも、モスクワからの公式な答えは、「レーダーが大統領の間、費の展覧会は開かせません」——ってももっと明快になった（笑）。これでどうも手のつけようがない。北でもまだてはかんしくつつあるけれど、中国でぼくが主張したのは、このプロジェクトは、個人と個人の関係に立つもので、国家と国家の関係ではない、というだろう。

東野 これが、中国のような国がいま必要としている関係だ。あまり記念を感じたこともなかったからね。写真も、一度だけ、町にちょっといるスパイに止められたとき以外は、何も捉えて平気だった。

東野 中国ということを考えると、今ひと組み合わせていかなかったかね。東洋の社会主義ソビエトの圧迫は、アメリカのアヴァンギャルドとコンペティション。もっとも、それは、日本を加えると、どちら、ラウェンバーグにおける日中安保条約に似た感もないもんだけだろうね（笑）。

ラウェンバーグ 中国に最初は紙を写る研究にいったのがよかったのかもしれない。一種の日本の関係で関係関係関係だわけだからね。ただ、タイミングがとっちまったところといえども、最近ではまだ調子が整わなかったけど、ぼくのいるところ、芸術作品には政治的スコープは必要ないという感情があつって、ぼくのものにつけて欲しい古い木版や絵画や現在の画家たちの展覧会を開いてもらったとき、ほとんど芸術家たちが参加できたという。それに、壁に書かれた古いスコープを塗り消して、さ
「心」（高崎 7 文字のうち）
1982年

から聞いた話だけも、かれが在北京で肖像画家たちを書いて歩いた、赤一色のモノクロームだけの絵を描いている。すくもいい画家がいたんで、フランスのノメール・カラリー、ペ・ガヨのことを知らないから関くと、相手にはやって、これほど創造の一部を描いたインスピリュスム、と答えたという（笑）。それにしてみても、中国でデュクーンへの興味があるとなれば、

ラシューベルグ、ぼくも思ったよ。しかしに職業とか本を持ち込むやがるらしいね。もともと、彼らの好奇心の旺盛さを、世界にたいする好奇心が失われたと仮定してないなら、もしかも、好奇心がなければ、世界はもっとほかだ。

東野　好奇心とは、自分への反逆から生まれるものだからね。

ラシューベルグ　好奇心は芸術家以外のほかの分野では武器として使われる所があった。芸術が最終的な目的を大切にするものであるのは、世界がどのような力かをつもりとしているからだ。それはスポーツに勝利もあるが遊んでいたけど、今度のオリンピックのすごさを見てみると、残念だが、選手たちが政治の手段を使っている。ロス・アンゼルスのオリンピックの参加者を、芸術家が制作する計画にやめたものなぜだ。ぼくの芸術は、いつも、自己表現よりもコミュニケーションの方向を向かっていった。

特定のさまざまな国でぼくが制作する作品は、ぼくのメソッドというエネルギーの一つ。「その国の実際の結晶」の副題で描かれている。ぼくは、その国家の文明や芸術、自然内にあるものが、ぼくのエネルギーを通して選ばれる、眼に見えるようになるようにした。その国の心は、自分の周間の世界を新しく見る方法をそこでつかむはずだ。

東野　本当に、そこでコミュニケーションが成り立つことを信じているわけですか。

ラシューベルグ　もちろんです。ときに、たとえば、今度のコンペでの作品制作のときでも、大学オーバー会社の現場の専門家と一緒に仕事にしたわけだけど、彼らがこれまでやってきたセラミックの仕事には考えられない、無茶なことを一緒に実験していた。そこには、エネルギーがなくなって、前向きに相談することもあれば、新米が思いがけないアイディアを提案することもある。こういう現場で、すでに、コミュニケーションがあったわけだ。

東野　君の作品といえば、コンバイン・インシューティングという考え方があるが、実現になっている。つまり、紙や木など、自分の考えた写真や実際的なオブジェ――それが世界的なポップジーでもあったり、同じでもない日常的風景でありながら、ただくわしく作り上げるわけだが、それがあがって新聞の紙面のように、いわば無関係の関係でによっては絵画にコンバイン（結合）されている。それは、世界というものの中に、あるいは多様性を……

ラシューベルグ　同時性と、あらゆる矛盾をも含めた。

東野　そう、もう世界というものの表面の黒白の多様性を、君の作品は反映していると思うんだ。そのとき、君は、画面にコンバインするイメージやオブジェをどうやって選んだのか、という
こと。観点的な面白さ、言語的な基盤が、あるいは本体的な
のか。
ラシェナーバー。それは本体的にダメだ。しかし、同時に、選択
はまた、事実や物から逸脱されると、意味を生する
言語の郵便のない物語だ。そこには、こうして一見する物に
複数の経験をしてきた郵便が残っている。それを見て、それが
何であるか、また、それが
何ではなく、二度、考えなければならない。ぼくは、画面
の調和とか造形ということは考えない。あるイメージやオブジェ
が画面上で、正にそこにあらゆる位置に見えるように見たとき、そ
れを使わないことにしているんだ。この作品の調和があまり
うまくいったら、頭をねじられることになる。
東野。相互に無関係な記事や写真が並ぶ存在の新聞の面積を
見ただけ。ぼくの十歳になる頃、新聞をいやがっていた。読むと
何とか、難しいニュースにあわないのは躺在床上、新聞は、いいニュー
スもあるとはいえないしかし、これがそうだ。
東野。新聞の紙面の大きさはいつも同じだから、ニュー
スがあろうときには大事件を大きく描かれたときもある。
彼女、ニュースがないときは新聞を白くしておけばいい、といわれ、休日日
で新聞が来ない、ども起こさずと安心する（笑）。
ラシェナーバー。ぼくの記憶がなかった、先週の「ニュース・フィーク」が彼女に見せなかった方がいい（笑）。
ぼくの作品にコンパ
ジョンがあるとすれば、それは、関係性を利用するのでなく、
如何が無関係に存在していることを強調するためにある。
それと、その作品を見て、たとえば、心の中に、ある関係性を
作り出すだろう。それは、多くの人が心の中に作り出す関係性とは
まったたく違うものであるので、この多様な経験が、作品の
生命を引きつける。新聞の場合は、一度読んだら忘れないい
d。しかし、ぼくの作品を読むとき、想像が抽象化され、不調
和なものだから、前よりは思いもつかなかったことが見えてく
るものである。そしていつかは、曖昧な画面のすべてが分かって
しまうときだろうかしれない。そうならならば芸術作品は象徴と
なくなってしまう。ぼく、その時を楽しみに先に延ばするために、
画面を破壊に、あるいは同じことだが、単純にしておきたい。
東野。君が今度、意義を考えて考えた「神社」を書いて
いてね。
陶板に選んだ相撲の人物は、すごくよく分かれるけど、奇妙なローマ
風の跡のようなイメージは読めていた。聞いてみると、なんの
こともない相撲の写真を九十四歳ものだと思ったのだけど、この
風に、君のコンバンーや、見られる国によって、たいへんエキ
ソチックなものに見えていた、たいへん日常的なものが残って見
えてくる。画面はせっかく均一にないで、見せる人間によっ
て、へんだ部分、とび出したりとそれ分だけ大きくなって見えてく
る。
ラシェナーバー。しかしね。ニクシークティックなものとキュッチ
ものとの間の結びつきが、もうひとつの者が生み出す。論
理学では、パラナと林を足すことは出来ないと見えられてけど、
ここでは、それが出来上がるわけ（笑）。
東野。君の作品は、世界が多様であると同じように複数なものに
しておきたいということはよく分かった。
ラシェナーバー。しかも長見的ね。ぼくの作品が、けっさ
で、単なる自分の記憶の意味ではないことはたしかだ。
いまやっている写真の仕事に "In and Out City Limits" ということ
があるので、ある都市へ行って、何日か過ごして、何枚かという写
真を撮る。ひとつに都市をよくしようとか、今回は、とか批判しよう
tの的でなくて、この都市を下で体験するに、多くの旅行
が光に投映できる。ニューヨークへ帰って、そのうちから八十枚
ほどを選んで、使ってきた都市を都市の都市に再掲載をやる。する
と、見客の選択の応答が生まれたんだ。見られているり
の前にありながら見えなかった、見たことないもの。
自分の名称を知っている片隅—それがで、自分自身を再発見
する。ぼくたちはまたの都市へ行ってきた同じことをやる。もう、
これは一冊の本になって出版される予定だ。
東野。もうひとつ、4分の1マイルという壮大な計画があると
聞いたけど、4分の1マイル、400メートルに及ぼすかの作品だね。
ラシェナーバー。これも、いったい何。もうひとつ仕掛け
の試み、自分の作品を自分の目を含めといえるという意義という
かな。端から端まで4分の1マイルの作品なんなので想像されるか
ない。ある作品のある時間をかけて作っていれば、どこから自分の
写真が選ばれる。だって、ふわふわしてしまっているけど、この通
と先入観をもつわけではない。ちょっと、圧で仮面をやったとき
と同じで、センタックの専門家に囲まれて、まったたく手前で無
知のぼくは、最初、すごく恥ずかってしまった。
しかし、無知こそが例外的な作品を作る人であって、自分が
何をしているかを正確に知っている芸術家は多い。それより最
悪の芸術家だ。もちろん、この作品が出来上がることが、自分
自身、最初の気分がどんなだったか、まったく分からないと思
う。
東野。その大作でセンタックされるのは、やっぱり世界中の中の場所や
人間のイメージやオブジェをなわね。
ラシェナーバー。そう、まだはじめたばかりで、それから中国
や日本に行ったから、これから、何でて見るのが分からない。
それに、この作品は一つ所にたてて展示するのではなくて、展示
しようもないけど、ばらばらにあちこちに展示して流れていく。
たとえば、グロードウィン343番地からはじまって、アップ・
ダウンで終わるとか、あるいは別の都市に行かないから最後まで見
えないとか。観客は地図を受領されて、作品から作品へと選択し
続ける。その移動が作品の一部になるから、じっくりには4分
の1マイルよりもはるかに良い作品ということになる。それに毎日
まりまで見て最初の方は忘れていて、何度も何度も見ること
になるかもしれない（笑）。

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