Robert Rauschenberg's handwritten draft of a statement about Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) in China.

**Description**
Robert Rauschenberg's handwritten draft of a statement about Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) in China.

**Physical Details**
graphite and ink on paper, 4 sheets, 13 x 8 1/2”

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**Original Source**
JULY 1, 1982
WE MET THE ARTISTS ASSOC. IN ANHUI. ENJOYED AN EXTRAORDINARY EXHIBITION PREPARED FOR US OF HISTORIC MASTER CHINESE MASTER PRINTS AND NEW WORKS DONE BY YOUNG ARTISTS. MANY WERE PRESENT.
WE THEN HAD AN OPEN EXCHANGE OF QUESTIONS, WHICH WAS NOT IMPROVED SOCIALLY BY OUR SLIDE PROJECTOR FAILING. WE WERE VERY MOVED BY THE QUALITY OF THE WORK AND THE KINDNESS TO SHARE IT WITH US.
LATER WE GAVE A BANQUET FOR GOVERNOR CHAN WUI WUI WHO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE TO ONE CONTACTS.
WE THEN HAD 5 INSPIRING DAYS IN XI'AN AND MOVED ON TO BEIJING. EVEN THO THE RAUSCHENBERG OVERSEAS CULTURE INTERCHANGE HAS BEEN MENTIONED AS MY DREAM ON SEVERAL INFORMAL OCCASIONS WITH BOTH ARTISTS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS AGENTS, IT WAS NOT UNTIL JULY 9, 1982 WHEN WE MET WITH DEPUTY MINISTER ZHOU WEI-CHI IN CHARGE OF CULTURAL INTERCHANGE.
That a date was set
May 2, 1982, and a place
could be selected with the
cooperation of the exhibition
China Exhibition Society
with the approval of M.A.A.A.
and L.I.X.H. It was agreed
that the space was very
beautiful and Rauschenberg
agreed to bring a show
that would touch both of
our cultures in such
away to bring our
each other. Our
differences and
for
similarities are equal
for communication
to stop the world from
destroying itself.
That a date was set—May 2, 1982—and a place could be selected with the cooperation of the China Exhibition Company, with the approval of An Jin and Li Xin, the space that was presented was the National Art Gallery. It is very beautiful and I agree to bring a show, self-funding, to allow our countries an artistic exchange. I self-funding, and if desired the artist would like to do a work for culture or art. Thank you for your support and to continue.
Copy of a telegram sent from Robert Rauschenberg to Zhao Ziyang, Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, thanking Zhao for allowing him to work with the Artists Association in China as part of the Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) and extending an invitation to Captiva Island.

Robert Rauschenberg

January 11, 1984

Robert Rauschenberg

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Original Source
Robert Rauschenberg’s handwritten draft of a telegram to Zhao Ziyang, Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, thanking Zhao for allowing him to work with the Arthists Association in China as part of the Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) and extending an invitation to Captiva Island.

Delivered from me to celebrate your visit to America and to thank you and your wonderful country for allowing me to work on art with your Artists Association in China. I wish to return to your hospitable people to share future aesthetic ideas. If you and your party would choose to seek seclusion and privacy on the Bay and Gulf of Mexico in Florida, USA, you would be my most honored guests. The accommodations are most natural, the landscape is tropical jungle. I am Robert Rauschenberg, Artist, Captiva Island Florida, Box 54, Telephone 813-472-0500.

Looking forward to a mutual lasting friendship as one citizen to another. All my good wishes and respect.

Robert Rauschenberg
THIS IS A PROGRESS REPORT TO DATE OF THE RAUSCHENBERG OVERSEAS CULTURE INTERCHANGE (ROCI, PRONOUNCED ROCKY LIKE MY PET TURTLE), POSSIBLY CELEBRATING THE QUARTER OF A CENTURY ANNIVERSARY OF OUR QUARTER OF A CENTURY UNION.) THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT IS MULTIPLE. FIRST TO INFORM OUR ADVISORS AND FRIENDS, SECOND TO STIMULATE MORE CONCERNE IN IT, THIRD TO WITNESS WITH EVERY THE ACTUALITY OF THE WHOLE PROJECT.

CHINA, JUNE 11 – JULY 14 1982

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD'S OLDEST PAPER MILL (SEE INSERT), WE MET IN BEIJING WITH LI TIAN AND GU YUAN OF THE ARTIST ASSOCIATION. NEXT WE MET WITH DEPUTY MINISTER ZHOU WEI CHI, IN CHARGE OF CULTURAL INTERCHANGE. HE SETS UP A MEETING WITH EXHIBITION COMPANY (WHICH IS CONTROLLED BY HIM).

Robert Rauschenberg's handwritten draft of a Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) progress report.
It is suggested, he inquired as to when I would like to show my work. I said I thought May 2, 1983 would be a good time. He said that would be a good time because the Chinese have a holiday around then. The "exhibition company" showed us an extremely fine space. They admitted they owned institutionally sponsored exhibits, but saw no reason they could not do this privately sponsored 1-man show. (Provided it is self-funded.) We were told to finalize the project through the Chinese Embassy in D.C., or with the Deputy Minister. The artist association has welcomed our return. Their approval was closely linked with the massive popularity of the exhibition. In the first week of Sept., Terry Van Brunt and RR plan to meet in D.C. with Don Saff (who returns privately to China in Oct.) and Chun-wei, our official liaison, to
BEGIN THE PAPER WORK FOR THE EXHIBIT. I PHOTOGRAPHED CHINA EXTENSIVELY, VAN BRUNT VIDEOED AND WE HAVE BEGUN THE EDITING. I AM WORKING ON A 100 FT. SINGLE SHEET COLOR PHOTO COLLAGE ON 'CHINA' WITH INDIVIDUAL STUDIES. THIS PROJECT IS BEING EXECUTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA GRAPHICS STUDIO. THIS WORK AND THE A SELECTION OF THE CHINA PAPER MILL WORKS WILL BE IN THE EXHIBITION WITH RR OTHER WORKS IN THE CHINESE NATIONAL GALLERY IN BEIJING IN D.C WE WILL PROPOSE THAT THEY HOST A GRAND PREMIER OF THE CHINA PAPER WORKS AND POSSIBLY AT THAT TIME ANNOUNCE THE ROCI IN CHINA ON MAY 2.

JAPAN JULY 14 - AUG 9 1982

R.R. AND T.I.B. BEGIN THE CERAMIC PROJECT (2 OF THE PIECES ARE APROX 16″X9″)
ALL ARE GUARANTEED NOT TO CHANGE ORGANICALLY FOR 3THOUSAND YEARS.

WITH THE OTSUKA-ONMI, A COMPANY BELONGING TO THE OTSUKA GROUP,
A 2.5 BILLION DOLLAR/YEAR PRIVATELY OWNED CORPORATION, WHOSE CHAIRMAN
MASAHITO OTSUKA SHARED THE EXCITEMENT BOTH WITH THE CERAMICS PROJECT AND R.O.C.I.

CHAIRMAN OTSUKA SET UP AN IMPORTANT MEETING WITH DENTSU,
THE LARGEST ADVERTISING AGENCY IN JAPAN WITH WORLDWIDE OFFICES.
WE MET, PRESENTED THE R.O.C.I. PLAN AND THEY AGREED TO COLLECTING FUNDS FOR THE WORLDWIDE ADVENTURE WOULD TAKE SPECIAL IDEAS. WE AGREED TO MEET AGAIN IN JAPAN IN SEPTEMBER WHEN I RETURN TO JAPAN TO COMPLETE THE CERAMIC PROJECT. AT THAT TIME IT IS EXPECTED THAT THEY WILL HAVE A REALISTIC PROPOSAL.

SEIBU MUSEUM - YOSHIKI TOYO
NO. 1 POET + CRITIC AND GUEST CURATOR
HAS PROPOSED AND INSISTS THAT ROCI BE THE
EXHIBITION OF THE NEW CONTEMPORARY
CONTEMPORARY WORK ONLY, HE STATES JUSTAS
DUCHAMP WAS FOR THE OPENING OF THEIR SECOND
MUSEUM AT KARURUZAWA, SEIBU HAS IN ANY
CASE REQUESTED AN OPENING IN 1984.

JAPAN ROCI'S ARTISTIC CO-ORDINATOR
IS FUJIKO KAKAYA, A CREATIVE
FOG ARTIST, WHOSE CURRENT ASSIGNMENT
IS A COMMISSION FOR A FOG FOUNTAIN
AT THE IMPERIAL PALACE IN TOKYO
OUTSIDE THE EMPERORS BEDROOM.
JAPAN ROCI IS NEGOCIATING
WITH THE JAPAN-US FRIENDSHIP
ASSOCIATION FOR FUNDING UPTO
100 THOUSAND WHICH WILL BE USED
TO BRING TRISHA BROWN DANCE
COMPANY TO JAPAN DURING RR.
EXHIBIT TO PERFORM T.B. + RR
COLLABORATIONS AND RELATED PIECES.
THE SUPPORT FOR THE GRANT
INCLUDED A PERSONAL STATEMENT
FROM SENATOR VAUTS, ITS FOUNDER.
RR PHOTOGRAPHED EXTENSIVELY IN
JAPAN EVEN THO IT RAINED
Los Angeles (Aug 9 - Aug 16, 1982)
Everyday - again T.U.B. Videod expansively. (not edited yet)

Los Angeles (Aug 9 - Aug 16, 1982)

I do fine tuning on prototype
china papermill work at Gemini.
We meet L.A. Denby at Gemini
inform and stimulate them. The
project is so new they knew
nothing about it and were
cautious and pleased to have
the same personal presentation
as their superiors in Japan.
Doug Christmas and Pontus Hulten
are alerted to find space in
(Olympic Time) The alternative
museum of contemporary art
space in Los Angeles has since
been located and secured
with funds from MoCA.
Pontus has agreed to accompany
us to Russia with Boubor Russian
translator Oct. 24, 1982 to meet
WITH OFFICIAL PERSONS TO PRESENT
AND NEGOTIATE RUSSIAN ROCI.

N.Y.C. Aug 16 - Aug 25

ROCI MEETING WITH AVAILABLE ADVISORS
AT 381 LAFAYETTE ST. IT WAS
DISCOVERED THAT NOTHING HAD
DEVELOPED IN N.Y.C.

FRANK SAUNDERS OF PHILLIP MORRIS
HAS PROMISED TO ARRANGE A MEETING
WITH PHILIP MONTEBELLO AND
BILL LEBERMAN OF THE METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART AFTER LABOR DAY.
IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT SEED
MONEY COULD COME FROM THE NATIONAL
ENDOWMENTS FOR THE HUMANITIES.

PIONEER INDUSTRIES, WHOSE VOICE
IS MILES RUBIN (PERSONALLY UNAVAILABLE)
HAS RUMORED INTEREST.
R.R. AND BILL GOLDSMITH, BECAUSE OF QUALITY AND URGENCY TO SEEK
PRIVATE FUNDING FOR ROCI BOOKS
AND IN-LANGUAGE CATALOGS. ALL
ROCI PUBLICATIONS WILL BE DEDICATED
TO THE LIFE OF THE LATE TANYA GROSMAN.
MARION JAVITS HAS INDEPENDENTLY CONTACTED OTIS SABES SUCCESSFULLY.
THEY REPORTEDLY SHOW A GREAT INTEREST IN CHINA, FRANCE AND GERMANY. MARION HAS VOLUNTEERED TO ASSIST JOHN HIGHTOWER TO WORK ON THIS LOCALIZED BUDGET.

CAPTIVA ISLAND AUG 25 —

FUGIKO NAKAYA - JAPAN ROC1 CALLED FROM JAPAN ON RETURNING FROM A PERSONAL ART INSTALLATION IN AUSTRALIA THAT AUSTRALIA WANTS FIVE SIMULTANEOUS EXHIBITS IN SPRING OF ’84.

MY OWN PERSONAL COMMITMENTS IN THE ARTS OUTSIDE ROC1 INCLUDE THE COMPETITION OF THE CERAMIC AND THE CHINA PHOTO COLLAGE PROJECTS, A LATE OCT. OPENING OF A SCULPTURE SHOW, EXHIBITING NEW WORKS AT THE OF THE FLO
ACE GALLERY IN PARIS, A PROPOSED NEW YEARS AFTERNOON NEW YEARS EVE TRIPLE OPENING IN NYC: KABAL-AMERICAN-ZEPHER SERIES OF OBJECTS AND WALLWORKS AMERICAN PREMIER OF JAPAN CERAMICS AT CASTELLUS (E. BROADWAY) AND NY SHOWING OF 100 FOOT CHINA PHOTO ASSEMBLY AT CASTELLUS (GREEN ST.) WALKER IN MINNEAPOLIS DECOY CHINA 100 FT CHINA PHOTO HAND PRINTED PHOTOGRAVURE CONTINUOUS TOYE EDITIONS, AND VARIOUS UPCOMING PERSONAL CHAIRABLE PROJECTS AND OF COURSE NEW WORKS.

FEB 83

SPECIAL GUEST AT INTERNATIONAL PAPERWORKS CONFERENCE ENCOURAGING CHINAS PARTICIPATION BY SENDING REPRESENTIVES IN CONJUNCTION OF MY PRESENTATION OF COLLABORATION OF WORLDS OLDEST PAPERMILL, A NEW COLLABORATION WITH TRISHA BROWN AND LAURIE ANDERSEN, SILK SCREEN WIND SURFING SAIL
Robert Rauschenberg's handwritten draft of his speech for the opening of the ROCI Tibet exhibition

**Description**
Robert Rauschenberg's handwritten draft of his speech for the opening of the ROCI Tibet exhibition

**Physical Details**
graphite on paper, 2 sheets, 11 x 8 1/2"

**Rights**
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**Original Source**
WHEN ONE REALIZES THERE ARE MANY ALTERNATIVES THEN DIFFICULTIES MAY BE AN INVITATION TO A NEW INSPIRED REALITY. I BELIEVE IF ONE IS OPEN MINDED THAT ART CAN TEACH THIS MESSAGE.

I WISH TO THANK THE PEOPLE OF LEBES FOR WELCOMING ME SO WARMLY AND WISH EVERYONE A MORE BEAUTIFUL AND LONG LIFE. I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU. AND IF I HAVE MY WAY, NEITHER WILL ANYONE ELSE. THANK YOU.
THANK YOU IMPORTANT NEW FRIENDS.

YOU SPOKE OF THE MYSTERIES
OF TIBET. SECRETS ARE KEPT MORE
SECURELY IN HIGH PLACES AND
THIS IS THE HIGHEST. THE LIFE OF
A TRUE ARTIST IS A CONSTANT
EXPLORATION OF MYSTERIES AND
THE UNKNOWN. EVERY THING IS
IN OUR PRESENCE WE ONLY HAVE
PRACTICE TO SEE IN ORDER TO SEE
IT. IT IS UP TO ALL OF US TO
FIND NEW ENERGY IN THE
FAMILIAR. I AM KIND OF AN
ARCHEOLOGIST OF THE PRESENT.
I SEARCH OUT SENSITIVE PLACES
OF NEW EXPERIENCES, SING MY
SONG AND GATHER NEW INFORMATION
FOR ANOTHER SONG WHICH WILL
BE SANG IN THE NEXT CAMP;
THIS IS IN HOPES THAT SOON
MORE OF US ALL OVER THE WORLD
THE UNIQUE WONDERS OF MOST
OF US. THIS WILL CREATE TRUST
AND MIGHT BRING ABOUT A
HAPPINESS EVEN WITH OUR
PROBLEMS.

Unique ID: A788
Storage Location: RRFA-05: Box 1, Folder 17
Year: 1985
Creator: Robert Rauschenberg

Description:
Photocopy of Robert Rauschenberg's draft of his speech for the opening of the ROCI Tibet exhibition, version written for Chun-Wuei Su Chien and included in Chien's “Beijing and Lhasa Report”

Physical Details:
photocopy on paper, 2 sheets, 11 x 8 1/2”

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Original Source:
WHEN ONE REALIZES THERE ARE MANY ALTERNATIVES, THEN DIFFICULTIES MAY BE AN INVITATION TO A NEW INSPIRED REALITY. I BELIEVE IF ONE IS OPEN Minded THAT ART CAN TEACH THIS MESSAGE.

I WISH TO THANK THE PEOPLE OF TIBET FOR WELCOMING SO WARMLY AND WISH EVERYONE A MORE BEAUTIFUL AND LONGER LIFE. I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU AND IF I HAVE MY WAY, NEITHER WILL ANYONE ELSE.

THANK YOU

FOR CHUN WUEI — THANK YOU ♥

BOB RAUSCHENBERG
Robert Rauschenberg's progress report on Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) sent to Chun-Wuei Su Chien

September 1, 1982

Chun-Wuei X

This is a progress report to date of the Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI, pronounced “Rocky” like my pet turtle, possibly celebrating the anniversary of our quarter of a century union). The purpose of this report is multiple: first, to inform our advisors and friends; second, to stimulate more concrete input; and third, to witness with events the actuality of the whole project.

China, June 11-July 14, 1982: After a successful collaboration with the world’s oldest paper mill (see insert), we met in Beijing with Li An and Jao-Yuan of the Artists Association. Next we met with Deputy Minister Zhou Mei-Chi, in charge of cultural interchange. He sets up meetings with “Exhibition Company” (which is controlled by him). An exhibition space is suggested. He inquired as to when I would like to show my work. I said I thought May 2, 1983 would be a good time. He said that would be a good time because the Chinese have a holiday around then. The “Exhibition Company” shows us an extremely fine space. They admitted they honor institutionally sponsored exhibits, but saw no reason they could not do this privately sponsored one-pen show (provided it is self-funded). We were told to finalize the

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Unique ID: A818
Storage Location: RRFA-05: Box 5
Year: September 1, 1982
Creator: Robert Rauschenberg

Description:
Robert Rauschenberg’s progress report on Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) sent to Chun-Wuei Su Chien

Physical Details:
Printed paper with handwritten annotations, 7 sheets, 11 x 8 1/2”

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Original Source:
RAUSCHENBERG: OVERSEAS CULTURE INTERCHANGE

project through the Chinese embassy in Washington, D.C. or with the deputy minister. The Artists Association has welcomed our return. According to the deputy, their approval is closely linked with the massive popularity of the exhibition.

In the first week of September Terry Van Brunt and RR plan to meet in Washington, D.C. with Don Saff (who returns privately to China in October) and Chun-Yuei Su Chien, our official liaison, to begin the paper work for the exhibit.

I photographed China extensively. Van Brunt videoed and we have begun the editing. I am working on a 100-foot single sheet color photo collage on China with individual studies. This project is being executed by the University of South Florida Graphics Studio. This work and a selection of the China paper mill works will be in the exhibition with RR’s other works in the Chinese National Gallery in Beijing. In Washington, D.C. we will propose that they host a grand premier of the China paper works and possibly at that time announce the opening of the R.O.C.I. in China on May 2.

JAPAN. July 14-August 9, 1982: RR and Van Brunt begin the ceramic project (two of the pieces are approximately 16-feet-by-9-feet; all are guaranteed not to change organically for three thousand years) with Otsuka-Unmi, a company belonging to the Otsuka Group, a 2.5 billion-dollar-a-year privately owned

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RAUSCHENBERG; OVERSEAS CULTURE INTERCHANGE

381 LAFAYETTE STREET
NEW YORK CITY 10003
Tel: 212-228-5283

corporation, whose chairman Masahito Otsuka shared the excitement both with the ceramics project and R.O.C.I.

Chairman Otsuka set up an important meeting with Dentsu, the largest advertising agency in Japan with worldwide offices. We met, presented the R.O.C.I. plan and they agreed that collecting funds for the worldwide adventure would take special ideas. We agreed to meet again in Japan in September when I return to complete the ceramic project. At that time it is expected that they will have a realistic proposal.

Seibu Museum: Yoshiaki Tono, contemporary Number One poet, critic and guest curator, has proposed and insists that R.O.C.I. be the inaugural exhibition of the new museum for contemporary work only, he states, just as Duchamp was for the opening of their second museum at Karuizawa. Seibu has, in any case, requested an opening in 1984.

Japan R.O.C.I.’s artistic coordinator is Fujiko Nakaya, a creative fog artist, whose current assignment is a commission for a fog fountain at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, to be placed outside the emperor’s bedroom. Japan R.O.C.I. is negotiating with the Japan-U.S. Friendship Association for funding up to one hundred thousand dollars, which will be used to bring Trisha Brown Dance Company to Japan during R.O.C.I. exhibit to perform T.B. and RR collaborations and related pieces.

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The support for the grant includes a personal statement from Senator Javits, its founder.

RR photographed extensively in Japan even though it rained every day; again T.V.B. videoed expansively (not edited yet).

LOS ANGELES. August 9-16, 1982: I do fine tuning on prototype China paper mill work at Gemini. We meet I.A. Denstu at Gemini to inform and stimulate them. The project is so new they knew nothing about it and were cautious and pleased to have the same personal presentation as their superiors in Japan. Doug Crismas and Pontus Hulten are alerted to find R.O.C.I. space in Los Angeles for July-August, 1984 (Olympics time). The alternative Museum of Contemporary Art space in Los Angeles has since been located and secured with funds from MOCA. Pontus has agreed to accompany us to Russia with Beaubourg Russian translator on October 24, 1982 to meet with official persons to present and negotiate Russian R.O.C.I.

NYC. August 16-25, 1982: R.O.C.I. meeting with available advisors at 381 Lafayette St. discovered that nothing had developed in NYC.

Frank Saunders of Philip Morris has promised to arrange a meeting with Philippe deMontebello and Bill Liberman of the Metropolitan Museum of Art after Labor Day. It has been suggested

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that seed money could come from the National Endowments for the Humanities. Pioneer Industries, whose voice is Miles Rubin (personally unavailable) has rumored interest, and since then has been contacted for a meeting September 9.

RR and Bill Goldston, president of Universal Limited Art Editions, because of quality and urgency, are seeking private funding for R.O.C.I. books and in-language catalogs. All R.O.C.I. publications will be dedicated to the life of the late Tanya Grosman.

Marion Javits has independently contacted Otis Saffos successfully. They reportedly show a great interest in China, France and Germany. Marion has volunteered to assist John Hightower to work on this localized budget.

CAPTIVA ISLAND. August 25, 1982: Fujiko Nakaya—Japan R.O.C.I.—called from Japan on returning from a personal art installation in Australia today to say that Australia wants five simultaneous exhibits in the spring of ’84.

My own personal commitments in the arts outside R.O.C.I. include: the completion of the ceramics in Japan and the China photo collage projects; a late October ’82 opening of a sculpture show exhibiting new works at the inauguration of the Flow Ace Gallery in Paris; a proposed afternoon New Year’s Eve ’82 triple opening in NYC of the KABAL-AMERICAN-ZEPHYR series of objects and wallworks.

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at Sonnabend’s (West Broadway), American premier of Japan ceramics at Castelli’s (West Broadway), and NYC showing of 100-foot China photo ensemble at Castelli’s (Green St.).

Special guest, February, 1983, at International Paperworks Conference, hopefully encouraging China’s participation by their sending representatives in connection with my presentation of collaboration in world’s oldest paper mill.

A new theatrical collaboration, RR with Trisha Brown and Laurie Anderson; silkscreen wind surfing sails for special event for Olympics; take trip through the Everglades on a commissioned collaboration with Marjorie Stoneman-Douglas (92-year-old poet laureate of Florida) sponsored by the Center for Fine Arts, Miami.

A quickening of the continuation of The Quarter Of A Mile or Two Furlongs Piece possibly in connection with an anniversary celebration show for an important national museum; plus various upcoming personal charitable events and of course, new work.

It would be very helpful if the perfect international executive secretary appeared by any vehicle. We have an exciting job, a beautiful office and so far all fundings have come from my pocket. But we are moving right along. I realize that this is probably the most demanding and expansive art project in history, but I am certain it can make a concrete change in our one-to-one existence.

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Robert Rauschenberg Foundation
PEACE IS NOT POPULAR BECAUSE IT IS EQUATED WITH A STOPPAGE OF AGGRESSIVE ENERGIES.
ENERGY HAS NO STANDSTILL AND PEACE WILL NEVER COME ABOUT BY STOPPING.
STARTING A NEW USE, AGGRESSIVELY, OF OUR UNIQUE CURIOSITIES, OUR IMPATIENCE WITH IGNORANT CRUELTY, AND ENCOURAGING THE MOST GENEROUS PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS WILL MAKE WAR A SHAME OF ITSELF.

I WROTE THIS

BOB RAUSCHENBERG

Robert Rauschenberg
RRFA 10: Donald Saff records on Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI)

Select materials related to ROCI: China - low-resolution scans only

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RRFA 10: Donald Saff records on Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI)

Select materials related to ROCI: China - low-resolution scans only

This was the speech Bob gave at the opening. My Chinese copycat was taken by the 1st secretary. We all liked it very much. So I hot copied this for me.

You Important New Friends:

I spoke of the mysteries of life. Secrets are kept more securely in high places and this is the highest. The life of a true artist is a constant exploration of mysteries and the unknown. Everything is in our presence we only have practice to see inorder to see it. It is up to all of us to find new energy in the familiar. I am kind of an archeologist of the present. I search out sensitive places of new experiences, sing my song, and gather new information for another song which will be sung in the next camp. This is in hopes that soon more of us all over the world will know the unique wonders of most of us. This will create trust and might bring about a happiness even with our problems.
THANK YOU IMPORTANT NEW FRIENDS.

YOU SPOKE OF THE MYSTERIES OF TIBET. SECRETS ARE KEPT MORE SECURELY IN HIGH PLACES AND THIS IS THE HIGHEST. THE LIFE OF A TRUE ARTIST IS A CONSTANT EXPLORATION OF MYSTERIES AND THE UNKNOWN. EVERYTHING IS IN OUR PRESENCE WE ONLY HAVE PRACTICE TO SEE IN ORDER TO SEE IT. IT IS UP TO ALL OF US TO FIND NEW ENERGY IN THE FAMILIAR. I AM KIND OF AN ARCHEOLOGIST OF THE PRESENT. I SEARCH OUT SENSITIVE PLACES OF NEW EXPERIENCES, SING MY SONG AND GATHER NEW INFORMATION FOR ANOTHER SONG WHICH WILL BE SING IN THE NEXT CAMP; THIS IS IN HOPES THAT SOON MORE OF US ALL OVER THE WORLD WILL KNOW THE UNIQUE WONDERS OF MOST OF US. THIS WILL CREATE TRUST AND MIGHT BRING ABOUT HAPPINESS EVEN WITH OUR PROBLEMS.
WHEN ONE REALIZES THERE ARE MANY ALTERNATIVES, THEN DIFFICULTIES MAYBE AN INVITATION TO A NEW INSPIRED REALITY. I BELIEVE IF ONE IS OPEN Minded THAT ART CAN TEACH THIS MESSAGE.

I WISH TO THANK THE PEOPLE OF TIBET FOR WELCOMING SO WARMLY AND WISH EVERYONE A MORE BEAUTIFUL AND LONGER LIFE. I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU AND IF I HAVE MY WAY, NEITHER WILL ANYONE ELSE.

THANK YOU

FOR CHUN WUET: — THANK YOU ♡

BOB RAUSCHENBERG
RRFA 10: Donald Saff records on Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI)
Select materials related to ROCI: China - low-resolution scans only

The Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange....

...One Artist's Pilgrimage in Behalf of World Peace

For many artists, it is sufficient to gain, in one's lifetime, recognition as a master and artist of consequence. For others, recognition is secondary to other kinds of accomplishment. Robert Rauschenberg has enjoyed a special place in the world of art for nearly thirty-five years. Yet today, at a time in his career when his artistic powers continue to expand, his respect for life and his passion for cooperation, sharing and celebrating the human condition through world peace has dictated for him a course of action that transcends conventional definitions of artistic purpose.

Classical definitions and descriptions have never been applicable to Rauschenberg or his art. Rejecting artificial intellectual and elitist distinctions that separate art and life, Rauschenberg's purpose is to release unifying forces which make experience whole and worthwhile. In the same spirit, Rauschenberg rejects the idea that humankind should be alienated and fractured by cultural and social distinctions that tend to divide and separate humanity from itself. His art reveals the unifying power in the differences that now divide us. Through his art we are able to eradicate barriers to understanding created by differences in language and culture.

The Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange is an exhibition conceived to bring to the peoples of the world an opportunity to develop a new vision of themselves and their relationships to each other. During the next five years this ever-changing exhibition will travel to twenty countries presenting works produced by Rauschenberg based on his personal odyssey to countries covering a broad geographical and cultural spectrum of differences.

Cooperation and collaboration are at the center of Rauschenberg's working methodology. He continually seeks out and collaborates with local artists, writers, performers, fabricators, printers and technicians. His art is the unique product of a sharing with them of life's many offerings and opportunities.

The openness, integrity and respect characteristic of Rauschenberg's relationships with his collaborators extends to his attitude toward the very materials used in the making of his art. Each has its own special qualities to contribute. The cardboard box is as respected as the water lily or the most exquisite temple for all, in their diverse beauty, have a commonality in the fact that all can provide service as materials for art. One image collaborates with another; paint merges with the photographic image and found objects speak to us in a fresh way. Passions, insights and life burn in a new unpredictable dynamism of change. Art becomes life.

As Oriental painting pays homage to the profundity of Nature, Rauschenberg's art expands the concept of Nature to include society's by-products which, in their own way, evoke a sense of profundity when embraced by the artist's eye, mind, heart and hand. Like Li Bai's poetry, Rauschenberg's art steps out of confining boundaries and delights us at a new level of comprehension. As the art of Qi Baishi elevates common imagery to a high aesthetic level, revealing the beauty implicit in common objects, so the art of Robert Rauschenberg reaches into the ordinary world of things to work its magic for the soul.
Rauschenberg’s contact with the people of China and their rich traditions has moved the inherent nature of his art. His work in 1982 at the Xuan paper mill in Jing Xian in Anhui Province produced objects acclaimed for the exquisite quality of the craft of the world’s oldest paper mill and the high level of his artistic achievement. The seventy sets of paperworks titled “Seven Characters” and the 100-foot photographic piece titled “Chinese Summerhall” are prime examples of the culture interchange concept in action. Reflecting the paradox of uniqueness and similarity in all people, Rauschenberg images come together in a common format onto canvas, paper or space in a manner not unlike “ji jin” in traditional Chinese art. Change is the only constant.

Literal descriptions of Rauschenberg’s art are not particularly helpful in grasping its artistic, social and human content. However, the following anecdote may be useful in understanding the spirit and thrust of his life and work.

In 1972, during a three-month collaboration at Graphicstudio at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida, Rauschenberg was shocked to find that several cardboard boxes, carefully selected for use in his art, had been removed from the studio by university custodians. In their eyes, these objects were simply used and useless boxes ready to be consigned to the garbage dump.

Undaunted, Rauschenberg and his collaborators rushed to the dump in search of old friends. After all, he had already once saved these boxes from the trash pile; another effort seemed in order and worthwhile. Under the watchful and amused eyes of bulldozer operators at the dump, the Rauschenberg group probed the massive mountain of cultural throwaways. Once more, Rauschenberg rescued these objects from a fate of eternal oblivion, gave them new life and the work of making art continued.

As we look at the panorama of Rauschenberg’s art, we marvel at the many times he has interrupted society’s penchant for moments of thoughtlessness and waste. Reclaiming that which we condemn and discard and giving us, through his art, one more opportunity to experience important life and aesthetic values, Rauschenberg has contributed much to enlargement of all human consciousness.

Rauschenberg’s growth as an artist has been filled with challenge and risk. He knows how easy it is to be misunderstood. But, for him, the pressing issues of art, life, love and peace are too important not to be addressed directly with courage, sensitivity and imagination. In a certain way, misunderstanding can lead to a kind of enlightenment. Rauschenberg’s art allows us to determine for ourselves what it is we want to know. We are participants in the completion of a process initiated by the artist at the moment of the making of his art. In the end, each of us is personally responsible for what we permit ourselves to know.

The Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange represents a natural extension of lifelong concern. It stands as eloquent testimony in behalf of Rauschenberg’s belief that differing cultural values, when exchanged through art, unleash potent forces hospitable to international understanding and world peace. Powerful symbols freed of parochial meanings that isolate and divide people now present themselves as images which testify to the beauty, unity and wholeness of all life. The works shown here do not represent the artist’s view of the world, rather, they offer a new means for the world to present itself to itself. Through his art, Rauschenberg gives us perhaps a last opportunity to reclaim that which has been lost among men...an opportunity to share the uniqueness and sameness of various cultures within a framework of mutual caring, respect and dignity. We wish him well in his ambitious pilgrimage in behalf of world peace.

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August 16, 1985
RRFA 10: Donald Saff records on Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI)

Select materials related to ROCI: China - low-resolution scans only

The world tour exhibition of the art of Robert Rauschenberg is dedicated to the concept that art is the most eloquent international language that we have at our disposal and that the critical importance for people to communicate may be accomplished through artistic means. Art eradicates the barriers that language differences create.

The exhibition will travel through twenty countries on all continents, thereby representing various sociological differences. Though variation is important and enriches the fabric of life, the brotherhood of humankind makes us fundamentally related. Rauschenberg's perceptions of an individual country will help foster understanding by other countries by their experiencing his imagery, insights and reactions. The exhibition will be Rauschenberg's response to the beauty and character existing in dissimilar societies and is an effort to share those sensibilities. Works will be produced in each country in an attempt to capture the uniqueness of various cultures while demonstrating the kinship that is an essential part of society. Rauschenberg's aesthetic is devoted to this end.

Rauschenberg finds beauty in the relationship of disparate objects. His art is not the art of a caste system. Images are without hierarchy. He finds expressiveness, integrity, eloquence in objects and imagery that would normally be overlooked as inconsequential and elevates those images to a height of importance equal to objects which are considered, by tradition, beautiful. Therefore, Rauschenberg is imbuing value in everything and making us react to all aspects of life in terms of new relationships and new experiences that ultimately...

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add to the richness of our being. The cardboard box is as respected as the water lily or most exquisite temple and all, in their diverse beauty, have a commonality. That recognition is expressed in Rauschenberg's art by placing disparate objects in the same context. Rauschenberg appeals to viewers because he has shown us that all of life is the material for art, thereby making the possibilities of art an infinite creative process. Like Li Bai's poem, Rauschenberg is willing to step out of confining boundaries so as to delight us with experiencing a new order of comprehension.

By Rauschenberg assembling his images as he does, the openness of the relationship and the integrity of the object allow viewers to expand their own understanding of the inter-relatedness of the world, its peoples, its objects. The viewer, therefore, participates in making the art. The art is the collective essence of Nature. Oriental painting pays homage to the profoundness of Nature. Rauschenberg interprets the scope of Nature to encompass society's by-products which are, in turn, recycled as art. One does not analyze a Rauschenberg work image by image but one should allow the work to enter the mind through the heart as one freely associates with it. The work is, at once, a celebration of life, a paradox of the uniqueness and similarity of all people. Rauschenberg's images come together on a common format of canvas, paper or sculpture like "jijin" in traditional Chinese art; society shares the common format of concerns, passions and insights. Life is unpredictable; art, in turn, must be unpredictable. Art, like life, is dynamic and always in a state of change. Change is the only constant.
Rauschenberg's work opposes elitism by honoring all aspects of life as in the work of Qi Baishi whose art most strongly represents this philosophy and who has catalyzed public education through the visual image. Qi Baishi's work elevates common imagery to a high aesthetic level by sensitizing us to the beauty implicit in common objects. Our soul is the richer, more complete for these insights – the magnitude of the essential beauty in all things. This can also be said of Rauschenberg's art.

Learning is a celebration of life's offerings. The quality of the artist's work grows through his various experiences. In the past, Rauschenberg has traveled and collaborated in numerous countries which include, amongst others, France, India, Japan and China. In the summer of 1982, he worked at the Xuan Paper Mill in Jing Xian in Anhui province. This project was exhibited internationally and received great acclaim for the exquisite quality of the craft of the mill and the high level of artistic achievement. The richness of China's tradition has been a profound experience for Rauschenberg and has aided the incisiveness of his art. The work of Rauschenberg and the exhibition as an entity will metamorphize over the period of the tour as the work grows and the viewer and artist evolve an understanding through artistic dialogue in the course of time. It is his wish to share his experiences with other people of the world. To travel through the world absorbing its offerings facilitates humanistic expression through the truth of experience. Art must be a product of experience and to understand the humanism of societal creation, one must journey through society's accomplishments and Nature's wonders.
Rauschenberg's working methodology is always a collaborative process in a particular environment, a collaboration between artist, printer, fabricator and technician. So it is with his work that one image collaborates with another, paint is merged with photography, technology, screen printing, found objects. A collaboration of imagery is his aesthetic and a collaboration of countries is the global concept of this culture interchange exhibition.

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