

## PRESS RELEASE

Robert Rauschenberg  
*Scenarios 2005-2006*

1–25 November 2006

Monday – Friday 10am-6pm  
Saturday 10am-1.30pm

Vermillion Plaza (Scenarios) 2006

Waddington Galleries are happy to be exhibiting eight new works by American artist Robert Rauschenberg. Taken from his recent series *Scenarios*, each work consists of two panels with a total measurement of eight by ten feet. The uniform dimensions allow Rauschenberg to focus on composition; blocks of photographic imagery are juxtaposed inside a negative white space. Their size and subjects show an undiminished ambition to create works of vitality that connect with the present day.

In dealing with images of the regional Rauschenberg addresses the universal. Although at first glance the main iconography seems American, shrouded in the veiled coastal light of Florida, in *Kennel Club* 2005 we can see placards from Westminster Square, a European number plate, the commodities of oil and water and a cut-out of two Greenland geese contentedly resting from their borderless global migration.

In *Vermillion Plaza* 2006 (above) he captures the so-called magic hour, where the sun hasn't quite set. The yellow, orange and reds from a single photograph of the setting sun are echoed with colours from industrial objects such as parking cones and a pneumatic drill. The transfer pigments give a warm luminosity to his open inquisitiveness, placing adjacent images to form different scenarios.

Robert Rauschenberg is eighty-one, the same age Henri Matisse was in 1952 when he made *L'escargot*, his arrangement of cut-out forms on canvas. Rauschenberg shows a similar clarity, refinement and immediate directness of application in *Scenarios*. Where Matisse used scissors to create shapes, Rauschenberg uses the digital 'cut and paste' of a computer to produce his scale, colour and contour. Where Matisse's assistants placed the shapes under his instruction, Rauschenberg's position the printed acetates over the substrate before transferring the image directly by means of a squeegee, enlivening the surface with a fragmented viscosity as desired. This pictorial disintegration can be seen in the seductive Technicolor of sunlit poppy petals, quietly subverted by the work's title in *Rehab* 2005.

From his first simple exposure of a figure on blueprint paper in the late forties (*Female Figure* 1949), through his photographic collage and ensembles of the fifties (*Rebus* 1955), his photographic silkscreens of the sixties (*Barge* 1962), to his solvent transferred images of the seventies (*Hoarfrost* 1974), photography has been an imperative ingredient in the work of Rauschenberg for over half a century.

Robert Rauschenberg was born in Port Arthur, Texas, in 1925. In 1949 he studied under Josef Albers at Black Mountain College, North Carolina. There he formed friendships with Cy Twombly, Merce Cunningham and John Cage. In the early 1950s he lived in the same dilapidated loft building in New York as Jasper Johns, a period that produced an intense exchange of ideas and artistic support between both artists. His first one-man exhibition was in 1951 at Betty Parsons Gallery, New York, and he has since exhibited extensively worldwide on an almost annual basis. Rauschenberg left New York in 1971 to establish a home and studio on Captiva Island, off the Gulf coast of Florida, where he still resides. In 1997, a major retrospective of his work was held at the Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Please contact Louise Kybert for further information and images