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 for immediate release

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digital images available upon request (see last
 page of release)



Weisman exhibition *Au Courant: Robert Rauschenberg’s Currents* recalls historic Minneapolis exhibition from 1970

Exhibition dates: June 20–October 4, 2009

(Minneapolis, MN) – The Weisman Art Museum (WAM) presents *Au Courant: Robert Rauschenberg’s Currents*, an exhibition of prints by renowned artist Robert Rauschenberg. The exhibition opens June 20 and runs through October 4, 2009. The exhibition includes *Currents*, a massive, 54-foot-long screenprint Rauschenberg created in 1969–70. The print is made from collages of newspaper clippings from New York, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles newspapers. From government corruption and war to drugs and gay rights to astronomical events and the weather, the headlines and images in the prints depict the predominant social concerns at one particular moment in American history. *Currents* is part of the collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and on loan to the Weisman for *Au Courant*. The Weisman’s exhibition includes the large print and a series of twenty-six related smaller prints, *Features from Currents*, which the Weisman owns.

Currents and *Features from Currents* were originally shown in spring 1970 at the acclaimed Dayton’s Gallery 12 in Minneapolis. Located on the twelfth floor of Dayton’s department store, Gallery 12 had, by 1970, built an wide-ranging reputation for showing and selling cutting-edge contemporary art. In a 1967 article, the Minneapolis Tribune called Gallery 12 “a major international art gallery.”

Currents exemplifies an artistic style Rauschenberg had used in previous work where he collaged images pulled from American popular culture, history, and mass media. “He would find images from contemporary life and put them right into the art,” said Weisman curator Diane Mullin. “He thought of images as things that could be appropriated. He was well known for it in the art world.”

Gallerist John Stoller, who organized the original *Currents* exhibition, says the work is highly relevant today. “When you think of the importance of the media today, the flash of images, and then you look at *Currents*, it’s almost like what you see on TV now. Rauschenberg was so ahead of its time. The work is still extremely relevant.”

Robert Rauschenberg was born Milton Rauschenberg in Texas in 1925. He attended Kansas City Art Institute and the renowned Academie Julien in Paris in the late 1940s. In 1964 Rauschenberg was awarded the Grand Prix for Painting at the 32nd Venice Biennale, an event that established his reputation internationally. He rejected the emotional, self-oriented work of the Abstract Expressionists, whose work dominated the American art scene in the 1950s. He was well known for using non-traditional materials and approaches. His series of ‘combines’ integrated painting and three-dimensional collage with non traditional materials (‘Monogram,’ for example, used a stuffed angora goat, a tire, a police barrier, the heel of a shoe, a tennis ball, and paint). He collaborated with many well-known artists in a wide variety of disciplines, most notably musician John Cage and choreographer Merce Cunningham. Indeed, he defied the traditional idea that an artist stick to one medium or style, engaging over his career in painting, sculpture, printmaking, choreography, acting, and set design. He is generally considered to be one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. He died in 2008.





RELATED PROGRAM

Thursday September 17, 7p.m.

Free. Refreshments provided.

WAM CHATTER: WHAT IS NEWS NOW?

Newspapers folding, 24-hour cable news channels, talk radio, web 2.0, blogs, embedded reporters, videography, and citizen journalists. These are just a few of the markers of the changing arena of journalism in the United States.

September's WAM Chatter asks thinkers and practitioners about the state of news now. Dr. Nora Paul (Director, Institute for New Media Studies, University of Minnesota) moderates. Panelists include Paul Schmelzer, editor of the Minnesota Independent, and Chris Ison, professor of journalism at the University of Minnesota.

WAM Chatter programs are presented in the popular 'pecha kucha' (Japanese for 'chatter') format. Each presenter uses exactly twenty slides for twenty seconds each. These rapid-fire presentations are followed by a moderated Q & A with the audience.

OTHER EXHIBITIONS AT WAM

Stories from the Somali Diaspora: Photographs by Abdi Roble

Exhibition dates: June 20—September 27, 2009

Art(ists) on the Verge: 2008–2009 Northern Lights/Jerome Emerging Artists Commissions

Exhibitions dates: July 5—August 23, 2009

(continued)

ABOUT THE WEISMAN

The Weisman Art Museum is located at 333 East River Road, Minneapolis, on the University of Minnesota campus. Admission to exhibition galleries is always free. For more information on museum hours, driving directions, and parking options, visit weisman.umn.edu

Au Courant: Robert Rauschenberg's Currents

June 20–October 4, 2009

Digital images available upon request. Email Christopher James at james052@umn.edu or call 612-625-9685.

REPRESENTATIVE IMAGES:

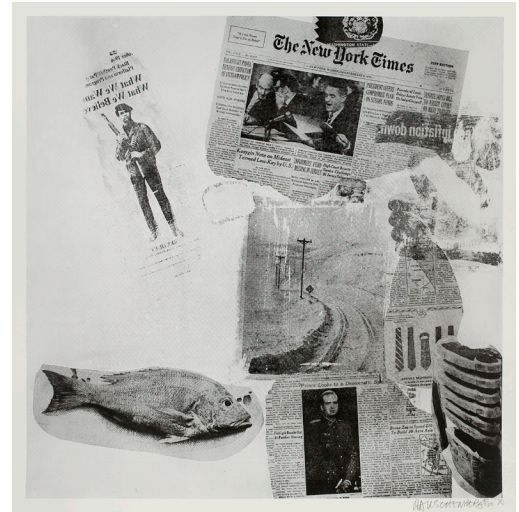
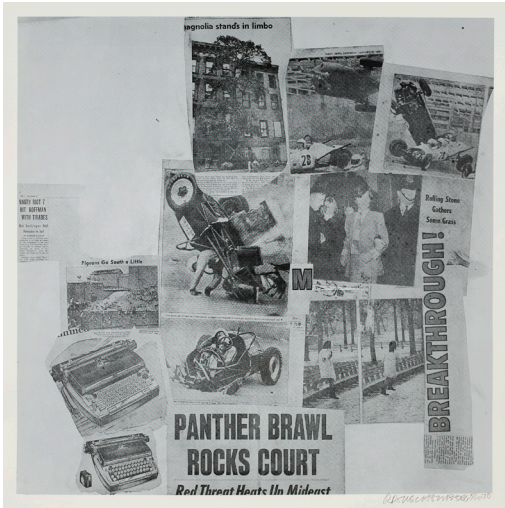


IMAGE CREDITS

top left: Robert Rauschenberg, *Features from Currents #78*, 1970, screenprint

top right: Robert Rauschenberg, *Features from Currents #69*, 1970, screenprint

bottom left: Robert Rauschenberg, *Features from Currents #56*, 1970, screenprint

bottom right: Robert Rauschenberg, *Features from Currents #58*, 1970, screenprint