

**Robert Rauschenberg's *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* on View for the First Time in Asia this Summer at Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA)**

*On view at UCCA, Beijing from June 12 – August 21, 2016*



Installation view, *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* (1981 – 98) in *Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective*, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, 1998 – 99, Photograph by Erika Barahona Ede, © FMGB Guggenheim, Bilbao

***“There is no reason not to consider the world as one gigantic painting.” – Robert Rauschenberg, 1961***

**January XX, 2015 (New York/Beijing)** – The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation is pleased to announce that the artist's *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* (1981–98) will be shown at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing from **June 12 – August 21, 2016**. Ullens' presentation marks the first time this monumental artwork will be shown in Asia, and precedes the 2016–17 Rauschenberg retrospective co-organized by Tate Modern, London and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (MoMA), which will travel to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA).

Rauschenberg intended *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* to be the longest painting in the world, and worked on its 190 parts – including two-dimensional panels and freestanding elements – over the course of 17 years. Totalling approximately 1,000 feet in length, *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* functions as a “self-contained retrospective”<sup>1</sup>, with sequences presenting techniques, materials, and motifs utilized by the artist throughout his career, and referencing past series including his *Combines*, *Cardboards*, and *Gluts*. Materials range from textiles and clothing to oil barrels and neon, while images in the work are drawn from the media and the artist's own photographs.

*The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* has been exhibited widely but intermittently, both within the United States and internationally. The artwork was exhibited in progress at venues including the Ace Gallery for the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Metropolitan Museum, New York; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Following its completion in 1998, portions of the work were shown at the

<sup>1</sup> Joan Young, "Large-Scale Paintings and Sculpture, 1975–present," *Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective* (New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1997), p. 392.

Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA), North Adams. Ullens' presentation is the first time that *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* will be exhibited in its entirety.

Exhibition curators Susan Davidson and David White said, "Bob once spoke of his work as 'not a monument to me but an invitation to you.' For an artist who delighted in the expansive gesture, *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* is one of Rauschenberg's most ambitious works by far, yet one that also rewards intimate and thoughtful viewing. The Ullens Center is particularly well suited to present *The 1/4 Mile* in a way that celebrates both its grandeur and its intimacy, allowing visitors to spend the time needed to truly experience this immense artwork."

The last exhibition in China dedicated to Rauschenberg was more than thirty years ago, when the artist held a solo exhibition at the National Art Museum in Beijing in 1985 as part of the Rauschenberg Overseas Cultural Interchange (ROCI). A multi-year program of creation and exhibitions intended to promote cultural communication across borders, the ROCI tour engaged eleven countries including Germany, Chile, China, Cuba, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Tibet, Venezuela, Malaysia and the United States. The *ROCI China* exhibition was a key turning point in the development of Chinese contemporary art at the time, exposing artists to techniques and concepts beyond those taught in the state art academies and influencing the generation of avant-garde artists who came to be known as the "85 New Wave".

Ullens' exhibition of *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece* will be accompanied by a presentation of Rauschenberg's color photographs from his travels in China, as well as documentation and ephemera related to his historic 1985 show.

Christy MacLear, the Rauschenberg Foundation's CEO, explains, "When Rauschenberg went to China for his ROCI project thirty years ago, the world was a different stage. Where borders were once closed, now we are all ubiquitously connected. Where artistic practice was once regionally focused, now we live in a global culture. The Rauschenberg Foundation felt that this transformation of art's role within the world should be celebrated by going back to Beijing with a work worthy of China's grand scale and rich cultural tradition. We are thrilled to be collaborating with Ullens not only to present *The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece*, but also to connect with artists from the region who have been greatly influenced by Rauschenberg's legacy."

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### **About the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation**

The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation fosters the legacy of the life, artistic practice, and activist philosophy of one of the most important artists of the 20th century. Through exhibitions, scholarship, grants, and a residency program, the Foundation furthers Rauschenberg's belief that art can change the world, while ensuring that his singular achievements and contributions continue to have global impact and resonance with contemporary artists.



Robert Rauschenberg Foundation  
381 Lafayette Street  
New York, New York 10003

The Foundation is represented by three world-renowned galleries – Pace Gallery (New York, London, Hong Kong and Beijing), Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac (Salzburg and Paris), and Galeria Luisa Strina (São Paulo) – who each contribute to the growing reception of Rauschenberg's work among audiences across the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Asia.

**<http://www.rauschenbergfoundation.org/>**

**Media Contact:** FITZ & CO, Liza Eliano, [liza.eliano@fitzandco.com](mailto:liza.eliano@fitzandco.com), + 1-212-627-1455 x 0921