



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum of the City of New York Celebrates Robert Rauschenberg's Centennial with Landmark Exhibition

Robert Rauschenberg's New York: Pictures from the Real World explores the artist's groundbreaking use of photography in depictions of urban life

Media Contact: Pressoffice@mcny.org and 917.492.3482

(New York, NY) - In celebration of the centennial of Robert Rauschenberg (1925–2008), and in partnership with the **Robert Rauschenberg Foundation**, the **Museum of the City of New York** (MCNY) proudly presents **Robert Rauschenberg's New York: Pictures from the Real World**, a major exhibition on view from **September 12, 2025 to April 19, 2026**. This dynamic show explores Rauschenberg's innovative integration of photography and found objects into his art, reflecting his deep engagement with “the real world” and his complex relationship with New York City.

Widely regarded as one of the most influential artists of postwar New York, Rauschenberg's approach to art-making pushed the envelope for an entire generation, reshaping the art world in New York and around the world. At the heart of his practice was a desire to incorporate the tangible world around him into his art. Gathering materials and inspiration from his surroundings, he often brought found objects and images sourced or reproduced from magazines and newspapers into his paintings and sculptures. But Rauschenberg was not merely a user of found imagery; he was also a photographer with a bold creative vision—an essential aspect of his artistic practice that is the focus of the exhibition.

The show is organized into three sections—***Early Photographs, In + Out City Limits***, and ***Photography in Painting***—tracing the evolution of Rauschenberg's photographic practice and its interplay with painting, sculpture, and assemblage. His earliest images are largely intimate portraits and experiments with formal elements such as framing, light and shadow, and flattening the picture plane.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is ***In + Out City Limits***, a three-year (1979–81) photographic survey conducted across the United States—a project Rauschenberg had originally conceived decades earlier as a student at Black Mountain College in North Carolina. His New York photographs from this project reveal his fascination with the signs and symbols of human culture, even in the most humble or discarded remnants of the city. Together, these photographs emphasize his observational rigor and his constant effort to

channel the fleeting, ineffable moments of life into his work—revealing a deep sensitivity to the social landscape.

In addition, the exhibition presents a selection of works created between 1963 and 1994 that combine Rauschenberg's New York City photographs with images taken around the world, illustrating how he recontextualized his photographic imagery through his innovative creative process.

“By incorporating photographs and everyday objects into his artworks, Robert Rauschenberg placed the realities of life at the center of his art, blurring traditionally held boundaries between the two and compelling us to look more closely at the world around us,” said **Sean Corcoran, Senior Curator of Prints and Photographs at MCNY**. “Our exhibition will highlight Rauschenberg's enduring relevance, as his work continues to resonate in an increasingly image-saturated world.”

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated companion book, co-published by MCNY and Giles Ltd, featuring contributions from Sean Corcoran and **Helen Hsu**, Associate Curator for Research, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

“The Museum of the City of New York is thrilled to honor Robert Rauschenberg's centennial,” added **Stephanie Hill Wilchfort, Ronay Menschel Director and President of MCNY**. “This exhibition not only underscores Rauschenberg's profound impact on the art world but also celebrates his deep connection to New York City, which shaped much of his creative journey. We are grateful to the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation for its partnership and support, which makes this exploration of his transformative work possible.”

Courtney J. Martin, Executive Director of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, remarked, “We are honored to support the Museum of the City of New York's thoughtful and timely exhibition. New York was not only a backdrop for Rauschenberg's practice, it was also a catalyst for the ways that his objects would take shape for the entirety of his career. This exhibition reminds us how the city's energy, texture, and unpredictability were central to his groundbreaking approach to artmaking.”

Lead funding for *Robert Rauschenberg's New York: Pictures from the Real World* has been provided by the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, with additional support provided by Matt & Marisa Brown, Ronay & Richard Menschel, Jill & Peter Kraus, Elizabeth Belfer, and Gillian & Robert Steel. This exhibition is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. The Museum of the City of New York's programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

About the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation builds on the legacy of artist Robert Rauschenberg, emphasizing his belief that artists can drive social change. Rauschenberg sought to act in the “gap” between art and life, valuing chance and collaboration across disciplines. As such, the Foundation celebrates new and even untested ways of thinking.

About Rauschenberg 100

Robert Rauschenberg’s (1925-2008) strong conviction that engagement with art can nurture people’s sensibilities as individuals, community members, and citizens was key to his ethos. The Centennial celebrations seek to allow audiences familiar with him and those encountering the artist for the first time to form fresh perspectives about his artwork. A year of global activities and exhibitions in honor of Rauschenberg’s Centennial reexamines the artist through a contemporary lens, highlighting his enduring influence on generations of artists and advocates for social progress. The Centennial’s activation of the artist’s legacy promotes cross-disciplinary explorations and creates opportunities for critical dialogue. For more information and continued updates on Centennial programming and news, visit rauschenberg100.org.

About the Museum of the City of New York

The Museum of the City of New York celebrates and interprets the city’s history, art, popular culture, and civic life, highlighting New York’s influence worldwide. Founded in 1923 as a private, nonprofit corporation, the Museum serves hundreds of thousands of visitors annually from around the world through exhibitions, school and public programs, publications, and collections.

RAUSCHENBERG100