

## SFMOMA Rauschenberg Research Project: Artwork Record

Robert Rauschenberg  
*Collection*, 1954/1955  
Oil, paper, fabric, wood, and metal on canvas  
80 x 96 x 3 1/2 in. (203.2 x 243.84 x 8.89 cm)  
Collection SFMOMA, gift of Harry W. and Mary Margaret  
Anderson, 72.26



Cite as: “Robert Rauschenberg, *Collection*, 1954/1955: Artwork Record,” *Rauschenberg Research Project*, July 2013. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, <http://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/72.26>.

### Marks and Inscriptions

Recto: None

Verso: On upper right corner of wood element attached to top of strainer, inscription in white chalk: “6 ½ x 8' 1" \$900”; on upper secondary support spline, near left edge, inscription in white chalk: “CAT No 286 R 19”; on upper secondary support spline, below chalk inscription, French customs stamp in dark blue ink: “Douane Paris Chapelle”

### Ownership History

David Myers, New York, purchased between 1955 and 1958<sup>1</sup>

Ileana Sonnabend, New York and Paris, purchased ca. 1960<sup>2</sup>

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, purchased for the museum by Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson, 1972

1. Myers purchased the work directly from Rauschenberg but did not record and does not recall the date of that transaction; he is certain he had taken possession of it by 1958. Myers, interview with Sarah Roberts, October 2011.

2. The exact year of the work’s transfer from Myers to Sonnabend cannot be determined. In a letter in SFMOMA’s Permanent Collection Object Files dated October 29, 1983, Sonnabend notes that she purchased the painting from Myers in 1959 or 1960. However, records in the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation archives date Sonnabend’s purchase to 1961 or 1962. In a July 4, 1958, telegram in the Leo Castelli Gallery papers, Sonnabend asks Castelli: “DID YOU QUOTE PRICE MYERS PICTURE?” Leo Castelli Gallery Records, ca.1880–2000, bulk 1957–1990. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Because the work was untitled at that time, it is generally referred to in correspondence and notes from those years as the “Myers piece” or “Myers picture.” The dimensions noted in the telegram confirm that the unnamed work in question is *Collection*. This telegram also suggests that Myers and Sonnabend had begun to negotiate the sale of the work; no receipts have

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been found to date the actual transfer of ownership. Handwritten lists in the Castelli Gallery Records show Castelli allocating Rauschenberg's works between Sonnabend and himself in November 1961 as she prepared to leave New York for Paris, some two years after their divorce. The first concrete documentation of Sonnabend's ownership of *Collection* is a loan form from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum for the 1963 exhibition *Six Painters and the Object*.

### Exhibition History

*Bob Rauschenberg*, Charles Egan Gallery, December 1954–January 18, 1955. This exhibition is generally referred to in the literature as *Red Paintings and Combines*. The exact start date has not been documented, but it likely opened after December 4, 1954.

Window display for the Annual Young American Artists' Window Exhibit, Bonwit Teller, New York, ca. late January 1957. *Collection* was shown under the title *Victoria*.

*Six Painters and the Object*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, March 14–June 12, 1963. Did not travel to remaining venues.

*Painting and Sculpture of a Decade, 1954–1964*, Tate Gallery, London, April 22–June 28, 1964.

*Robert Rauschenberg*, Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, West Germany, September 12–October 18, 1964.

*Robert Rauschenberg: Untitled 1953–54 and Thirty-Four Dante Drawings*, Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris, December 1964–January 13, 1965.

*Robert Rauschenberg*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, February 23–April 7, 1968. Traveled to: Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany, April 19–May 26, 1968; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (as *Rauschenberg, Oeuvres de 1949 à 1968*), October 10–November 10, 1968.

*II. Biennale Nürnberg*, "Was die Schönheit sei, das weiß ich nicht: Künstler-Theorie-Werk," Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Germany, April 30–August 1, 1971.

Untitled installation, University of Iowa Museum of Art, Iowa City, May 24–August 24, 1972.

*Poets of the City: New York and San Francisco, 1950–1965*, San Francisco Museum of Art, January 31–March 23, 1975. Did not travel to remaining venues.

*Robert Rauschenberg*, National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., October 30, 1976–January 2, 1977. Traveled to: Museum of Modern Art, New York, March 25–May 17, 1977; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, June 24–August 21, 1977; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, September 25–October 30, 1977; Art Institute of Chicago, December 3, 1977–January 15, 1978.

*Aesthetics of Graffiti*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, April 28–July 2, 1978.

*Facets of the Collection: Masterpieces and Recent Acquisitions*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, August 14–November 15, 1981.

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*Resource/Reservoir: Collage and Assemblage*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, July 30–September 26, 1982.

*American Painting: Abstract Expressionism and After*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, February 14, 1986–August 30, 1987.

*The Anderson Collection Gift of American Pop Art*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, February 4–May 30, 1993.

*Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, September 19, 1997–January 7, 1998. Did not travel to remaining venues.

*Robert Rauschenberg*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, May 7–September 7, 1999.

*Celebrating Modern Art: The Anderson Collection*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, October 7, 2000–January 15, 2001 (on view October 7, 2000–January 21, 2001).

*Robert Rauschenberg: Combines*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, December 20, 2005–April 2, 2006. Traveled to: Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, May 21–September 4, 2006. Did not travel to remaining venues.

*75 Years of Looking Forward: The Anniversary Show*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, December 19, 2009–January 16, 2011.

*Pop Art from the Anderson Collection at SFMOMA*, Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for the Visual Arts, Stanford University, August 13, 2014–October 26, 2015.

In addition to appearing in the special exhibitions listed above, *Collection* has been on view in SFMOMA's galleries nearly continuously since 1972 as part of an ongoing series of rotating presentations of the permanent collection.

### Publication History

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*Robert Rauschenberg*, with an introduction by Andrew Forge (Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1968), 18 (ill.).

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Walter Hopps, ed., *Robert Rauschenberg* (Washington, D.C.: National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, 1976), 5, 8, 10 (ill.), 11 (ill.), 77 (ill.).

Robert Hughes, "The Most Living Artist," *Time*, November 29, 1976, 54, 56 (ill.), 60.

Jeff Perrone, "Robert Rauschenberg," *Artforum* 15, no. 6 (February 1977): 24.

Charles F. Stuckey, "Reading Rauschenberg," *Art in America* 65, no. 2 (March–April 1977): 81.

John Russell, "Art That Sings: A Rauschenberg Retrospective," *New York Times*, March 25, 1977.

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Alfred Frankenstein, "Graffiti Take the Floor," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 4, 1978.

Charles Shere, "Graffiti—More than a Public Nuisance, to Eye of an Artist," *Oakland Tribune*, May 7, 1978.

Cathy Curtis, "Off the Wall," *Daily Californian*, June 2, 1978.

*Robert Rauschenberg: Retrospective*, directed by Michael Blackwood (New York: Michael Blackwood Productions, 1979), VHS, 45 min.

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