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


**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

Ileana Sonnabend, New York and Paris, purchased ca. 1960

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
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.


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


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


SFMOMA Rauschenberg Research Project: Artwork Record


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

Öyvind Fahlström, “En gata full av presenter,” Konstrevy 37, nos. 5–6 (1961): 180, 181 (ill.).


Painting and Sculpture of a Decade, 1954–1964 (London: Calouse Gulbenkian Foundation [in association with the Tate Gallery], 1964), 229 (ill.).

Robert Rauschenberg (Krefeld, Germany: Museum Haus Lange, 1964), n.p. (ill.).

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


Andrew Forge, *Rauschenberg* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1969), 31, 175 (ill. listed as *Untitled*).


“Two new abstract works at gallery,” *Daily Iowan* (Iowa City), June 6, 1972.


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


Arthur Perry, “Rauschenberg Meets Standard in Exhibition,” Artmagazine (Toronto) 11, no. 45 (September/October 1979): 42.


San Francisco Museum of Modern Art: The Painting and Sculpture Collection (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1985), 194, 195 (ill.), 255, 361 (ill.).


ラウシェンバーグ [Rauschenberg], Gendai bijutsu 14 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993), n.p. (ill.).


SFMOMA Rauschenberg Research Project: Artwork Record


*SFMOMA Painting and Sculpture Highlights* (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2002), n.p. (ill.).


Susan Davidson and David White, eds., *Rauschenberg* (Ferrara, Italy: Ferrara Arte, 2004), 71n15.


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Carolyn Lanchner, Robert Rauschenberg (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2009), 19 (ill.).


