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(36) Duke Ellington - Saturday - Museum of Modern Art - dining with Olgo. — Walpol Street - Marden - Marcia Kanan City

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Susan Hartnett - 1/7/78 at 124 Chambers

Sue is a big, strong, outspoken country girl, with spectacular red hair. Also highly intelligent, and with a dramatic way of speaking. She started to work for Bob in 1965, when he was still in the Broadway loft. She was working three days a week at the Bronx Botannical Garden, putting letters on the spines of books, when she got a call from David Whitney, with whom she'd gone to Rhode Island School of Design. He knew she knew Bob needed somebody to handle his affairs, he knew [illegible] 1960, the last [illegible]

Janis Joplin

Met her at Max's. She was sitting in the back, under the Flavin. "She sent someone over to tell me she was there, and that we were the only two people who ever got out of Port Arthur.

"I saw her many times after that, and we were both going out to LA just before she died, and/or was murdered — what's the name of that place out there, Sebastianis? She said, 'Bob, you know, I'm singing so well that I stay sober while I'm performing so I can hear myself. I've just been howling all those years.' That doesn't sound like someone depressed, does it?

"We used to talk about Port Arthur, and Proctor Street, and stuff like that. She talked a lot about her father, and always referred to him as the intellect in the family. I had advised her in another meeting against going down to take revenge at her high school class reunion. She barely got out alive. She really was putting on a show, and she overestimated the fact of her fame as a protector — the town hadn't changed that much."

"The same evening she told me how well she was singing, she also told me she'd bought a house — and the only thing missing was a Rauschenberg. I said she didn't have to worry about that. Three days later she was dead. I was at a party when I found out, and I thought it was the sickest joke I'd ever heard. She was so up.

"I'd heard her sing often. She was just sensational. Her expression had a classic sort of background. So many of the imitaters of that kind of energy don't have the integrity or the guts. It was real, even if it was too much. Expression is a style, an illustration of a passion, rather than a direct response.

"I had trouble with Guernica. I used to think it one of the most beautiful paintings in the world. But then I wondered, if it's so beautiful, how effective is it to stop war? When I was working on Currents I tried to destroy any quality that would upstage the information of the piece. But I still had to somehow fix them so it could be presented...

Dylan, Warwick

"I always wanted to meet Dylan. Brice Marden introduced us once, in a shoe store. He seemed so painfully shy, I just decided to pass this one up.

"Dione Warwick - I asked her to be in Spring Training, but I never got an answer. I'd gone to a concert of hers in Paris a few years before, and I was going to build Spring Training around her doing anything she wanted.

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Re-doing White Paintings (1968)

Why? "They weren't ever supposed to collect history or dirt." When one of them got dirty it was painted over or used for another piece. "They've been rebuilt and repainted many times. Pontus wanted to show them once -- I sent over the measurements, a sample of the canvas, and said for him to call us when he'd had them done and we would destroy the others. The white paintings have been painted by me and Cy, by Pontus, by Brice Marden and Sashka. The ones that exist now have been documented by finger-prints on the back, so they can't be copied, and these will be the authentic ones. But if something happens to one, it will be rebuilt and repainted.

"I don't believe in the real estate of art. I know the difference between them -- you do art to pay for real estate!

"They were painted either with brushes or rollers." Canvas was sized, and paint applied uniformly so there would be no visible details or accents. First it was chemtone, lately gesso.

I could do. I tried to give the other ten to Brigid Polk, if she would use them, but she never came around. They were extremely expensive to do. Probably now they appear quite tame, but they were scandalous then. Doug Christmas said the Canadian Customs tied up several pieces and confiscated the photographs.

"Andy, now, with his aesthetic, his lack of involvement -- he can get away with saying 'Send me a photo.' But I had to get involved."

unmatched shoes, which she lined up in the hall.

In 1967 she got Dorothea Rockburne to take over the housekeeping chores. "I couldn't stand it. It was too devouring. I'm a very independent person. And then, when he got drinking, sometimes he'd try to put me down. I really care too much about Bob as a person to get involved in all the stuff that goes on now -- the waste, the elaborate food, the sealskin coats he went in for for a time...

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Carnal Clocks (1969)

"The reason they were clocks was that I wanted to make an object that would function, not only as an art object but for a practical use." One was commissioned, by Mrs. Davidson in Canada - a portrait. Commissions for portraits of Trudeau and Agnelli were pending too. But Bob's idea was that he would go and live with the family in question and figure out what were the most important things in their life. He did so with the Davidsons, and got involved in all sorts of tense family situations and difficulties, and made him decide against any more portraits. The portrait concept was definitely not erotic.

The erotic stuff came about this way: "I'd bought a bunch of skin magazines to see what was going on. But they were so boring, and obvious. So I decided my challenge was to take all my own images photographically. I didn't blush when I took a sexy fire hydrant or a wok pan. But to get into the nitti gritti created some incidents every bit as challenging as the work of painting. I have the mechanisms in the basement for ten more -- there were going to be twenty. But my relation to the subject matter was so complex that ten was as many as I could do. I tried to give the other ten to Brigid Polk, if she would use them, but she never came around. They were extremely expensive to do. Probably now they appear quite tame, but they were scandalous then. Doug Christmas said the Canadian Customs tied up several pieces and confiscated the photographs.

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Abba Eban Story

Happened during the Six-Days War. (1967) It was Father's Day, and Marian Javits invited Bob to what she said was a simple family get-together. "It was raining hard, and I had some trouble remembering their address, and I arrived, in levis, mostly drenched. I was there about twenty minutes when Jack said we had to go to the Plaza for dinner. I said I can't, I'm not looking Plaza-ish. Jack said leave it to me. So we go. Jack made a couple of telephone calls in the lobby, and Abba Eban comes down. He was my favorite TV performer before I turned to the soaps; Eban was the Mamuth of the U.N. He came, and he said he was writing an address to the UN, and he just couldn't think there, with all the security procedures.

He said he had to relax somehow. I said why not come to my studio, nobody would think to look for you there? The next day I got a call, asking was I serious. I felt extremely privileged. Arrangements were made for him to come to dinner the next day. I spent all day cooking my house specialty, soft shell crabs gumbo, and when I was just about through I thought, 'Oh, my God, he's Jewish, he can't eat shellfish!' He came. I'd also invited the Ganzes. He sat down, and his first words were, 'If it weren't for the UN, peace could break out anywhere.' He stayed until the wee hours. His guards were stationed up and down the building on all floors. I've seldom been in the presence of anybody so in command of English and -- thoughts. He was marvelous with the double negative, which is something I've always liked to use. It's always seemed to me you could manage to say more in the same time that way, and I guess I always had too much to say, and nobody was listening."

unmatched shoes, which she lined up in the hall.

In 1967 she got Dorothea Rockburne to take over the housekeeping chores. "I couldn't stand it. It was too devouring. ~~Knocking~~ I'm a very independent person. And then, when he got drinking, sometimes he'd try to put me down. I really care too much about Bob as a person to get involved in all ~~that~~ the stuff that goes on now -- the waste, the elaborate food, the sealskin coats he went in for for a time...

Bob's "causes" are all good things, splendid. "But he needs that. He wants to have people beholden to him, to be seen as a great man."

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Bonnie and Clyde

Time commissioned the piece for a cover. RR met Warren Beatty and they became fast friends immediately. Faye Dunawaye was having an affair with Marcello Mastroianni then, and they decided they wanted a Rauschenberg. Bob brought over an early black painting, but by then they had already split up.

"I love movie stars.

Amsterdam. He was extremely sociable, and they had a wild time partying. Poker games and nude swimming and outdancing everybody else.

This was followed by isolation at Captiva, raising money for payment on the house by doing drawings on the 6' x 2½' counter in the kitchen.

And Bob was very important in her life.

"Nobody need ever be afraid again to do anything, thanks to Bob. I think John gave him that -- John is his real spiritual father. If you don't get the father you need, you usually find one, and John was Bob's. It took great courage to do what they did." Bob says that at one point John just cut him off.

Sue attacked the files and the tax records and the cofrespondence, which was a total mess. She also found herself cleaning, washing the dishes, ordering the food. "Bob was drinking a lot, but he wasn't really in the bottle then. You could get through to him."

She moved him into Layafette Street. During the move she found thirteen unmatched shoes, which she lined up in the hall.

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Dude Period
Lasted only six months, starting with arrival in Amsterdam with a travelling show in 1968. Right after doing Soundings, which premiered at the Stedelijk, then went to four or five other places in Europe. Bob went out dancing every night, to dinner with anyone who asked; he bought fancy clothes and drove all over Europe -- see Chronology on Broadside (Autobiography), which was sponsored by Clay Felker and Marian Javits and Milton Glaser. (Largest offset press in NY area).

Bob was going around Europe with Jaki Kornblitt, who ran a gallery in Amsterdam. He was extremely sociable, and they had a wild time partying. Poker games and nude swimming and outdancing everybody else.

This was followed by isolation at Captiva, raising money for ~~the~~ payment on the house by doing drawings on the 6' x 2½' counter in the kitchen.

And Bob was very important in her life.

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Susan Hartnett - 1/7/78 at 124 Chambers

Sue is a big, strong, outspoken country girl, with spectacular red hair. Also highly intelligent, and with a dramatic way of speaking. She started to work for Bob in 1965, when he was still in the Broadway loft. She was working three days a week at the Bronx Botannical Garden, putting letters on the spines of books, when she got a call from David Whitney, with whom she'd gone to Rhode Island School of Design. He knew she wanted more work, and he knew Bob needed somebody to handle his affairs. She stayed until July 1969, the last couple of years working exclusively on EAT. She had a lot of fights with Billy, and thinks very poorly of him -- his press conferences with champagne and girls in paper dresses. Sue is "a country girl -- I'd been a potter and was becoming a sculptor." And Bob was very important in her life.

"Nobody need ever be afraid again to do anything, thanks to Bob. I think John gave him that -- John is his real spiritual father. If you don't get the father you need, you usually find one, and John was Bob's. It took great courage to do what they did." Bob says that at one point John just cut him off.

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Sue Hartnett (cont)

lot of people were always trying to rip us off. And Billy always wanting to give us titles...

"Nine Evenings was utter chaos. Yvonne was so sick -- she nearly died. Steve and Bob were breaking up at that point. We were all working literally 24 hours a day for three months. The whole thing should never have been pushed as an avant-garde extravaganza. The experimental nature of the thing was the main thing. All that crazy energy -- people caught it.

"The engineers were disgruntled partly because artists are more colorful, they carry on and get lots of attention. Fred Waldauer was really a key figure behind the scenes. He had a larger view of it all. But some of the others were much more old-fashioned engineer types, and they looked askance at artists. There were miserable engineering failures, and of course that reflected on them. A lot of it was just jury-rigged -- wires all over the place, and if somebody tripped over one of them it wasn't going to work. Then, when Clive Barnes panned it, their pride was hurt. One of the engineers went around saying he was going to "punch him out."

Everyone connected with Nine Evenings was staying mostly at Bob's house. Originally the idea was that 381 Lafayette would become a sort of arts center - there would be film and tape studios, for films to be made of all those performances; there would be dance studios, work rooms, everything. During Nine Evenings there were engineers sleeping on cots all over the place, enormous quantities of food and booze."

E.A.T was created out of the confusion of Nine Evenings, and became responsible for the debt that resulted. Bob's work was put up as collateral for loans. Eventually, the consolidated loan from Bob was erased by Bob's buying up the entire edition of the "Swedish Portfolio," prints donated by TK artists, which had not sold at all; he gave them away and took the tax deductions.

Working against EAT afterward was the antiwar feeling building up among the artists. Made them suspicious of <u>any</u> corporation, and of Bob and Billy for trying to work with industry, Bob had strong feelings against the war too, and the hostility upset him (ask). Once in Bob's house, Lane Kirkland, the , was backed into a corner by anti-war artists; he finally said something to the effect that it was "the best war around," and they nearly killed him."

Bob was withdrawing more and more to Captiva. He'd brought Francis Mason in to run EAT (Sue says to spy on them and see what time people came to work and left - totally the wrong man for the job); that ended it for a lot of artists.

"But you can't tell Bob the truth, you know. This was his period of Piaget watches and sealskin coats -- and some of his worst art. Also a lot of social activity. Abba Eban hiding out at 381 Lafayette Street to avoid the press. But Bob can find a way. He always wiggles out somehow. I guess if you want fame you find a way."

Alex Hay was constantly with Bob then. Debbie says that's what broke up their marriage. "Bob is so <u>strong</u>. There's something inside him, some fantastic kind of power, and he can suddenly focus it on you and s-s-s-s-s. It's like a force, a field of energy. He can say something that just gathers up all the currents in the room and turns them on you."

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Sue Hartnett - cont

Dorothea Rockburne came in 1967 to clean, and Price Marden to do the files and be Bob's work assistant. "Within a month they were both sitting around the table most of the day, eating big meals and drinking pear brandy, at five dollars an hour. Dorothea used her relationship with Bob professionally - it really helped her a lot. Price not so much, he'd already established a reputation as a painter, but she hadn't."

"Bob can be really vicious and insulting when he wants to be. He eats people. I think Steve just had enough of it. Bob always says everybody ~~left~~ leaves him, but that's not true."

"Jasper used to read to Bob, for hours. Sometimes Bob would say that no interesting artist ever read, and I'd yell across the room, 'Oh yeah, what about Jasper Johns.' Did you ever hear the story of how they met? Something happened to Bob's eyes, it was a Sunday and he couldn't see, so he went down to the street for help. And Jasper found him."

Bob and Sue both worked in loony bins - another bond between them.

Jasper came to 381 Lafayette one day to pay a call. You could have cut the air with a knife. He was wearing green velvet pants, sort of tye-dyed. When he left, Bob burst out with something like, "Well, he certainly looks like a bag lady..." It was clear their feelings were still very raw.

The enormous contrast between Bob and Jap's respective openings in the last year: Bob's was so happy, everybody felt good, all the artists were there and everybody felt wonderful. Jasper's was cold, formal, oppressive.

Sue Weil had a lot to do with Bob's thinking and feeling, her ~~xxx~~ sensibility was crucial in forming his. Rauschenweil.

...And then after the museum opening, Bob on the ferry, full of fear.

The American quality of Bob and John in their work -- throwing away, prodigality, openness. As contrasted with Jasper's reverence for European culture, Wittgenstein, rigid codes and traditions.

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Brice Marden - 2/10/78

Born in the suburbs, Westchester. Went to college in Florida -- Lakeland -- wanted to study art but parents reluctant. Persuaded them finally, and transferred to Boston U. for BFA, then Yale for MFA. Married first wife in 1963, in Boston; one son. Moved to NYC 1963, and about nine months later split up with first wife. Had part-time job as guard at Jewish Museum, 11-5 five days a week; painted evenings. His father-in-law was a diplomat with UNESCO in Paris; distressed by the place they were living on Ave. C, he got them to come to Paris. Stayed four months, saw Rauschenberg at his show at Ileana's - impressed. Then back to Avenue C, and a job with fine art printer making silkscreens.

First one-man show at Bykert in 1967 - non-objective rectangles, "sort of abstract-expressionist." The gallery had advanced enough money for him to work full time for a month. But nothing happened as to sales, and he ran out of money. At that point he ran into Dorothea Rockburne, who said there was a job at Bob's. Started working there 1967 or 1968.

Bruce was originally hired to work on cleaning up after Nine Evenings - his first job was to fold up Steve Paxton's plastic tunnels, which filled the front room at Lafayette St. "I folded them into neat piles, and then Bob said he thought he could trust me, and he would be making a show in a couple of months, and I could stay on as a sort of janitor. I washed windows for weeks..."

By this time Brice had married Helen. They had three cats, and altho Bob is not overly fond of cats he said bring them along; this was the origin of the cat explosion in the basement.

Brice helped with the Revolvers. Bob was still doing a lot of EAT stuff then, spending a good deal of time on it. Kluver there a lot. Parties and benefits. The calling of the promissory note came as a shock to Bob - he hadn't really thought those things happened. He was friendly with the Javits, with Kheel, with Harry Van Arsdale and the unions.

Mud Muse - Teledyne was involved with war products, Brice thinks little sensors dropped along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and a night sniper gunsight. Other artists objected to Bob's association with them, but Bob would say that we were making art which is positive...

Bob doing a lot of travelling then. Helen and Brice would stay in the house and look after the animals while he was away. "It was really a weird job. Technically you're his assistant, but also you're a person who's being paid to sit around and drink with him. He was very lonely then, he'd just split up with Paxton. We'd talk art, and we'd go out to people's houses. He did seem sort of shaky in some ways. He couldn't really go out to bars because people would just hassle him*--once I remember a guy coming up to him at Max's, and saying 'You Rauschenberg? I'm going to get you' -- not angry or anything. And then there was a question whether he was ever going to paint any more.

"Bob was very helpful to me. He was a patron, he bought my work, or traded for it. The same with Dorothea. He was very helpful in a quiet way. It was much better for me that I went to work for Bob rather than for Jasper. I really was influenced by Jasper's work, but Bob's didn't

* He was the big guy hanging out. Even Warhol had stopped hanging out then.

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Marden (cont)

mean anything to me. About a week after I got the job, Jasper asked me what I was doing -- I think he wanted to hire me too."

White Paintings - Marden thinks it was because of the fuss over Minimal. Brice did the work, finding the right canvas, the supports just like the originals, and applying it without visible brushstrokes.

"Bob didn't seem to spend much time in the studio."

"Every party they ever had in that Chapel was a dud. There was something about it. Bob threw a big one for Warren Beatty and Julie Christie after the Bonnie & Clyde thing, and it was a real bummer. Beatty's friends stood in a group on one side of the room and the artists stayed on the other side.

"William Burroughs came by now and then. Also Sadruddin Khan, who just dazzled Bob. He was the most intelligent, sophisticated guy I'd ever seen.

"Bob was trying to dress up more then. He bought Cardin suits and tried to wear them, and it didn't work. He couldn't stand it. I think he bought a Cardin tuxedo. And he had a Bill Blass suit, with a wide blue plaid -- I called it his Bozo the Clown suit.

"It was like he had been on a big high and he was coming down.

Ileana

"His reputation was really strong in Europe. Ludwig had bought Soundings, which didn't get much attention over here. He was going a lot to Europe, and Ileana was doing a lot for him.

"He behaves towards her in a way different from anyone else. It's not motherly, and it's not sisterly. She's one of the few people who can really call him on something. She really gives him a rough time, unlike Leo, --the worst thing Leo does is ignore him, which drives Bob up the wall."

Working for Bob consisted mostly then of making coffee in the morning, then sitting around all day talking. The last year he was there he spent curating Bob's collection.

One day "Bob fired us. He called and asked us to come over, and said we were fired." Rockburne too. Bruce making $350 a week then, for about three days work. Plus medical insurance, presents every birthday, etc. Generous severance. Bob said, "You don't have to work here any more -- and it was true, I didn't."

"I remember him that he was the most intelligent person I'd ever met. But Bob didn't have to be a painter, the way Picasso did. He could have been anything."

"Bob and Jap were the first young artists who made it. That was impressive. It taught us in school that making contemporary art could be something -- after that art students didn't think any more about starving in garrets, they thought about coming to New York and making it.

"Most of the artists I know now aren't interested in Bob or Jasper's work. They're cynical -- they say, yeah, a big show every ten years to keep

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up your market." But Brice (and his contemporaries) were not impressed by either retrospective. Neither Bob nor Jap strikes them as great in the sense that DeKooning is great, or Picasso. "He's not as good as all that" -- and the media hype is annoying.

"Bob's work is more European than abstract expressionism, and that also applies to Jasper. I remember somebody referring to 'those beautiful Cardin whites' in Jasper's flag. It's French. The really heroic thing Bob and Jasper did was to make American painting international.

"Bob's a good artist and all, but he's not all that good. However you have to remember I'm speaking out of the anxiety of being about to turn forty."

Bob's Fetishes

His "money hat" -- an old painting hat he would put on whenever he needed money for something. He would also consult astrologers (Libra).

"He has a sort of flirtation with the mystical, not so much about his work, but about him and the things that touch him. He'll give you something, some little pebble, and say, 'Don't ever let it touch the ground.'"

When he bought Indian things, it was never on aesthetic grounds -- always some sort of story attached.

Homosexuality

A real factor in the scene, but maybe not too important. There are a lot of homosexual curators. For a while it was assumed that Brice was sleeping with Bob -- one's "assistant" a euphemism.

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Helen Marden - 2/15/78

Vivacious and quick-talking, in a soft voice. Blond hair worn in long bangs, cornsilk color. She's from Pennsylvania. English father, American mother. Went to Penn State, dropped out of grad school where she majored in art. Had planned to be a ~~pint~~ painter. Summer after college she worked for a non-sched airline in NYC, and assorted odd jobs,. Then went to West Indies for four or five months. Then to an art school in Woodstock. Finally back to NY in 1966 -- "It took me a while to get here." By this time she wasn't interested in being a painter. Married Brice in 1968, after living together for a year or so. Brice started working for Bob in Jan. 1967.

Helen never worked for Bob formally. She'd come in and help with parties, buy stuff for him when he needed it, etc. But it's clearly a sore point. She stopped seeing Bob when he invited her to Captiva and then put her to work sewing button holes for Hoarfrosts. She was furious.

"I decided I'd just always lie to Bob and say I loved all his work."

Brice and Helen fought a lot with Dorothea. There was a feud over who made the most, so every time Bob gave them a raise he had to raise her too.

They gave Bob three kittens from a litter - part Siamese part Burmese.

Bob is not really generous at all. "He always wants you to love him," so he gives you things, but expects a return. The opposite of Cy in this regard.

→ Bob's fear of going out alone.

His jealousy of Brice, as a younger artist.

Helen slept with Bob twice, she says. "It was just sort of warm and friendly. He loves touching, and hugging, and all that." Brice also slept with him once or twice. No big deal.

They were very much on call. Bob would telephone, say he felt nervous, and they'd run right over. He'd broken up with Steve recently, and he liked people around who were cheerful and bright.

Ileana - In Venice, Bob would jump up to fix her a drink. She gave him spending money. Bob says a lot of cutting things about people, but less about Ileana than anyone else.

"But Bob is a very special person. In spite of everything, knowing him has been one of the great things in my life."

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Debbie Taylor - lunch 1/6/78

Debbie is from California. She went with an artist in Venice, and through him, when she wanted to come to NY, got job as baby sitter for Larry Rivers' kids. Arrived in ~~March~~ April 1970 and stuck it out about three months. Larry and Clarice were separated by then, so she was mostly at Clarice's apartment. She knew one or two people in NY, including a girl who was living at Rauschenberg's in return for housekeeping duties. The girl invited Debbie to come and live there, with Bob's permission, and then when the girl left that fall Debbie took over as a sort of housekeeper at first. She had a real job as a secretary, but eventually Bob suggested she quit and work for him full time -- he was firing ~~Ernest~~ Dwight Damon. She stayed there until June 1976, doing more or less everything, including the cooking and entertaining for a year when Sashka went to Europe (in a sulk after his wife went off with Alex Hay).

She idolized Bob for years. Used to tell her mother in LA that if there were a God he must be like Bob. Kind and generous and thoughtful. But there is another side to that. She thinks Bob really is pretty much what he wants to be (kind and generous etc etc)., but that he's so afraid he isn't, so fearful of being "found out," that he has to surround himself with sycophants and ass-kissers. He's tremendously insecure and unhappy at heart. And when his sycophants tell him what he wants to hear he's too intelligent to believe them, so that doesn't work either. She thinks he drinks mainly for this reason.

He can't stand to have anyone around him less than happy and cheerful. For a while when she first worked there, Debbie was very depressed because of a debilitating relationship with a boyfriend. Bob took to yelling at her, hurting her deeply, saying, "You used to be so beautiful, and now you never smile, you look awful." If you're down, he's unable to give you any support. His generosity extends to people who are up.

Debbie thinks he's always uncertain what he does is any good, is art -- at least until the Smithsonian show. That brought about a change. For a whole year beforehand he was drinking worse than ever, was terribly worried; what if nobody liked the retrospective? Now he feels he has power again, and one result is that he's less nice to Leo.

The relationship with Leo is colored by the fact that he thinks Leo has never really liked his work. Goes back to that dinner. Often he'd be depressed for days after Leo came to look at new things. Conversely, with Ileana he has let himself be totally manipulated, until very recently. She did like his work, and she butters him up a lot; but when he refuses to do something she wants, or gives things to Doug Christmas that she thinks should have gone to her gallery, she gets angry and says she never wants to see him again, whereupon Bob is in the dumps for days. Eventually he calls and begs her forgiveness. Debbie has tried to argue this with him, saying that Leo (whom he bad mouths a lot) has always stood by him while Ileana has just manipulated, has rarely paid for anything. etc. Bob got so upset she couldn't go on. But just recently she heard him tell Ileana not to act that way any more, so maybe he's finally learned the lesson.

Sometimes when he's very drunk and it's very late, Bob talks about the breakup with Jasper. His story is that he and Jap had been having difficulties for some time. One night he asked Jap if they could spend the night together. Jap said no, he was busy. Later that evening, Jap came to borrow money so he could take someone else out. Bob thought this was the last straw. Then Steve Paxton came and asked if he could use Bob's shower. Bob thought this

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Bebbie Taylor (cont)

was an opportunity. Much later, Jasper -- having changed his mind -- came into the room and found Bob and Steve in bed together. That was the end for Jasper. Bob feels he was rejected. Now and then he's tried to see Jasper. Once in Paris, when they were both in town, he called and suggested lunch; Jasper said OK, but call the next morning to confirm, and then he wasn't in when Bob called.

Bob also tells a story about the time he nearly committed suicide. Planned to jump out a window at Lafayette Street. This was just before he met Bob Peterson, who ended his loneliness. Peterson appears sweet and dumb, but may not be as dumb as all that.

Sashka is Japanese. He met Bob through Simone Swan, who called to ask if he could stay there. He proved to be the perfect servant (altho his pride would be mortally offended to be called it). He cooked, kept house, was the perfect host for parties. This continued until his wife left him for Alex Hay. Bob was uncomfortably in the middle on that one -- whenever Alex came to the house, Sashka would leave. The wife soon left Alex too, but Sashka has never forgiven. He went to Europe for a year, and nobody heard a word from him. When he came back he apparently decided not to do as much work as before.

Brice and Helen Marden both worked there for years. Brice and Bob are friends again, altho Helen claims they were fired. Dorothea Rockburne and Susan Hartnett are not friends any more.

The only artists Bob is really friendly with, besides Brice, are Cy Twombly and Jim Rosenquist. Cy in fact is about the only person who's kept a friendship with Bob over many years, and is nearly the only person who talks honestly and candidly to him.

Working for Bob is very hard, because he insists that you be "family," it has to be a friendship, with the result that any sort of private life is out of the question. Charlie Yoder has been smart this way, by not living at the house and by insisting in advance on clear understanding about hours etc.

Bob really is a starfucker. Part and parcel with his insecurity -- if he can associate with stars he must be one. Hard to take when he talks about Faye Dunaway etc. The first time he met Ornette Coleman, he gave him a print and signed it then and there.

A lot of Bob's stories when drunk are filled with self-pity. He loves to tell about his father on his deathbed, in the hospital. Bob had been called, and was sitting by the bedside. His father looked at him suddenly, after hours of unconsciousness, and said, "I've always hated you," and died.

The year before the Smithsonian saw a lot of self-destructive acts. This was the period he broke his ribs one time at Tampa airport, while trying to slide down the moving rail of an escalator (?). But of course when he's drunk he likes to be active, to jump around, so maybe it's not all self-destruction. He wants to have a good time.

Bob always encourages the people around him to do their own work. This may cause problems in terms of Peterson, who devotes himself totally to the wife's role.

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Ck. quotes with her

Marian Javits - 5/30/78

Marion was born in Detroit, moved early to New York where she lived in Harlem and Bronx -- her parents were always splitting up. She went to Hollywood at age 17 hoping to be an actress, but no luck. Back to NY at age 19, and shortly met Jack Javits who was then a Representative. Married 19?? .

What got her into the art world was a close friendship with Harriet Peters (now Vicente). Harriet and Donald were ardent collectors, and they knew all the artists. Harriet ran a real salon/where you met deKooning, Kline, everyone. Marian began going to galleries with Harriet. And then one evening the four of them went to Bob Rauschenberg's studio on Front Street for dinner, with Leo, the Barrs, Rene d'Harnoncourt. She remembers there was one Johns painting on the wall, either a grey numbers or alphabet. Bob's material was in one corner, his combines on other walls. They had ducks flown up from Louisiana. As she recalls, the upshot of the evening was a decision that Bob was "not quite ready" for the Museum, altho Jasper clearly was.

After that she didn't really see Bob for a number of years. In the meanwhile, though, she got really interested in helping the arts, and helped to draft the legislation that became Javits's bill to create NEA. Also before that, she and Jack were able to get a bill through liberalizing the definition of art works coming through customs.

She got hooked up with Bob again in 1965, through a project she had with Clay Felker called Broadside Art, Inc. This was while New York Magazine was in planning stage. Felker wanted to do large-format picture books on current affairs -- Vietnam, Sex, etc.-- and Marian decided that Rauschenberg and Norman Mailer should do the one on Vietnam. Mailer gave a tentative assent, but Bob told her he was too involved with Nine Evenings to do it. (Interesting to speculate what Vietnam project might have generated). In the process, though, Marian fell in love with Bob. She began spending a lot of time with him, at his studio -- it became her hideout, her place away from the other life. "He really had my head and my heart" -- she says she was deeply involved with him, never thought of him as homosexual even when she knew he was sleeping with men, always sort of thought she could turn him around. This lasted for ten years, and was the main thing in her life/during that period. She feels they are very much alike, in energy, in feelings, etc. It was always an unconsummated relationship, and she admits that Bob did not always treat it with kindness or consideration. "In fact he might laugh like hell if you asked him about it."

She contributed significantly to Nine Evenings, helped them get the Armory, and later got involved in EAT. ~~Also Rauschenberg~~ Bob decided that instead of Vietnam he would do his "Autobiography" for Broadside -- biggest litho print ever pulled. Obviously he was using her, but not cynically.

The entourage - he uses them, too, even when they're all ripping him off. Bob is always alone, no matter who he's with. She couldn't stand the Belgian dealer who was his lover for a while, wasn't too keen on Doug Christmas, who was also in the picture then.

Bob himself is very show biz. He enjoys playing those roles. Bob is the romantic artist, touching many things, always pressing on; Jasper is the classicist, making a deeper commitment. Jasper's friends are not like Bob's, and he pays much more attention to them, really listens. Marian feels that Bob's lack of commitment ~~to his own~~ may have kept him from being a greater artist. She never saw him despondent.

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Prints

RR has done largest hand-rolled litho, yet produced in US. He tried everything — pressed leaves, kitchen glasses, a saw, old printers plates, etc. to the stone; he printed with effaced stones.

("Autobiography")

"Autobiography" was 17' long, in ed. of 2000. Done 1968 on world's largest billboard press. Later that year he did "Reels," six prints based on "Bonnie & Clyde," in 64 continuous hours at Gemini. Photos used for "Reels" were orig. collected by Time which had commissioned a Bonnie & Clyde cover-collage earlier in '69.

MARION JAVITS MILTON GLASER CLAY FELKER

SIDE

1968

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parachute-like object on his back. This panel also includes the view of New York from Rauschenberg's studio and is superimposed on a map of the section of Texas which was his childhood home. All three panels are printed in various colors.

The Rauschenberg visual Autobiography has been sponsored by Broadside Art, Inc., an organization set up to experiment in the use of new reproduction techniques. (The name of the company comes from the use of the word broadside in the sense of it being a large-size sheet of paper printed on one side only and used for distribution or posting.) One of the artistic objectives of the organization, which includes Marion Javits, Milton Glaser and Clay Felker, is to produce art of such large scale that it would create a dramatic environment wherever shown. The scale of the Rauschenberg visual Autobiography is the first example.

It will be on exhibit at the Whitney Museum from January 22 until February 22. Examples from the limited edition will be on sale at the desk in the museum for $150 for a complete set of three panels.

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207 EAST 32 STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016, LE 2-9247 MARION JAVITS MILTON GLASER CLAY FELKER

BROADSIDE ART INC.

1968

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Robert Rauschenberg's newest work, his visual Autobiography, will be shown to the public for the first time beginning Monday, January 22, at the Whitney Museum. The work, a dramatic visual record of his life, is four and a half feet wide and seventeen feet long and is displayed on the first floor of the museum just in front of the entrance to the sculpture garden.

The Rauschenberg visual Autobiography has been produced in an edition of 2,000 with each work approved and initialed by the artist. It is an artistic experiment in which, for the first time, advanced reproduction technology and plate-making equipment have been used to produce a work of art. After more than a year of preparation and research, Rauschenberg assembled the various visual elements of his autobiography. Then he went to the New York plant of a billboard lithographer and, working with the largest billboard press made, Rauschenberg created his work through the means of advanced photo-lithography techniques. When the visual Autobiography, which comes in three sections, came off the press, it was the first time it had ever existed in its realized form. Working with the commercial lithographers, Rauschenberg controlled the printing process precisely, rejecting unacceptable impressions and approving those in the completed edition.

Rauschenberg designed his visual Autobiography to be shown stretched out to its full seventeen feet; however, because it is in three self-contained sections, the three panels also can be arranged side by side horizontally.

The first panel contains an almost life-size X-ray of Rauschenberg. The skeletal form overprints Rauschenberg's horoscope, blown up to enormous size.

The second panel contains a written record of the major events and influences in Rauschenberg's life, which form an oval that has been photographed through a distortion lens camera. At the center of the written autobiography is a picture taken during Rauschenberg's Texas childhood of him and his family in a boat.

The bottom panel is dominated by a large blown up photograph of Rauschenberg during one of his dance works in which he is skating along with a huge circular parachute-like object on his back. This panel also includes the view of New York from Rauschenberg's studio and is superimposed on a map of the section of Texas which was his childhood home. All three panels are printed in various colors.

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WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

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Memo:

ALL EDITORS

PRESS PREVIEW : ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM ART

Monday morning, January 22, 11 A.M., Mrs. Marion Javits (the wife of the U.S. Senator) will "unroll" on the lobby wall of the Whitney Museum at Madison Avenue & 75th Street what has been described as "a new kind of artistic medium, a form of environmental journalism". It is a 17½ foot long by 4½ foot wide billboard-size art lithograph, created by Robert Rauschenberg and called the "Rauschenberg Autobiography".

Mrs. Javits, Mr. Rauschenberg, and a number of prominent guests will be on hand for the special ceremony. Mrs. Javits, President of Broadside Art, Inc., has arranged with the Whitney Museum to place the work on sale at $150 each, initially at the Whitney. A limited signed edition of 2,000 has been printed. It is the first lithograph that makes uses of the technology of modern billboard press, camera and plate making equipment.

According to the sponsors, the "Rauschenberg Autobiography" is "an experiment because of the scale. It just doesn't hang on a wall to be gazed at from time to time. It exists all around you. It's capable of dominating a whole wall, a whole ceiling, a whole room. It is art in a totally new medium: a form of environmental journalism which in turn is made possible by modern production techniques."

Press Preview: 11 A.M. 1-22-68
Photographs and material available.
Press day - till 6 P.M.

For further information:
Leon Levine
Doris Palca 249-4100

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