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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	IV.C.45

④ Israel - India - Sri Lanka - Nepal, Pakistan, Yemen, South & North

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See Also:
Tag, p. 17 (Israel); p. 18 (Egypt)

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~~India~~
India (1975)

Gemini was negotiating with Japan for another "on location exotic spectacular," following the one on Anvers, which had been a great success. But the process of paper-making in Japan didn't seem that different from France. Meanwhile the Sarabhais had been calling Bob to ask when he had prints and drawings on paper. So I thought, let's have the Ghandi ashram" -- RR, RP, Mika, Christopher Rauschenberg the overthrow of the Indian franco more or less abandoned path.

Venetian Series of ~~prints~~ ^{mixed media} works inspired by a holiday trip to Venice. "Everywhere you looked there was this combination of elegance and scale."

in endless supply there - for account books, stationery,

been fascinated with mud, from North Africa. I tried a bed up using rag pulp and creosote, and a lots of ed the mildew, and made it

Hoarfrosts

"After the Venetian series I had a hunger for change. I was trying to figure out some way I could present images or their ghosts or their suggestions without constructing an object. So that what you're looking at could just as easily be part of your own memory, as presence. They were exciting to make, because they were so complex it was impossible to imagine what you were doing. It was almost pure undirected activity until after the fact. Putting physical limitations to force out your possibilities. I thought of them as shimmering information. The material wasn't important -- it was mostly sheesscloth, so fragile I'd have liked to draw on air if I could."

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Venetian Series of ~~mixed media~~ ^{mixed media} works
inspired by a holiday trip to Venice.
"Everywhere you looked there was this
Combination of elegance and scale.
At the same time the smell of rot.
You sensed that the city was sinking.
And there wasn't anything you could
do about it."

(Florida, March 11, 1973)

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RR - "Hoarfrosts" (1975)

Images printed on floating veils of silk,
chiffon, muslin, taffeta, cheesecloth.

Often superimposed.

Ghost images, Traces.

Echoes of Santa drawings, of Eased de Kooning.

RR - "Jammers" (1976)

Rectilinear panels of silk, satin,
cotton voile etc in solid colors,
black, white, or striped. No images
Bamboo poles.

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Bob's Entourage (from Ileana)

Bob likes to have people around him the same way he likes to have materials to make his paintings - he draws from each. He needs them for information, for one thing -- he never sees movies, reads books or newspapers.

Once recently, in the kitchen at Lafayette Street, late at night, Bob said, "The world is a family." Ileana shuddered at the idea. But Bob would like it to be that way. He needs to have and give lots of love. He is a very lonely person, more so than Jasper.

Ivan never knew Bob well personally. Says the to repaint the White Paintings, to show he had Ivan feels this was the low point in his career is so feminine and delicate - the opposite of

Egyptian cotton with clay and mud, a little creosote, and a lot of Indian spices as a binder -- they also killed the mildew, and made it more permanent.

"We were living in a Corbysier house owned by one of the richest families in India. Every morning we'd get up and go to the Ghandi ashram, where we'd work with descendants of the untouchables -- and don't think people have forgotten what an untouchable was. They really liked our loose group - we had none of those prejudices. ~~It~~ It was just before the monsoons, which meant the temperature was nearly 115 every day. When I started the rag-mud pieces, I had an air-conditioned studio but I thought India had enough of that caste system so I worked outside with the crew, mixing and packing and stomping mud. As a result, nearly all of us ended up with some exotic disease.

"Gemini paid for most of the cost of production. I forced an exhibition in the home of Sarud and Asha Sarabhai.

"India was where I relaxed into the acceptance of silks and opulent colors, realizing their use. India destroyed my prejudice about the weakness of a 'beautiful' painting."

"A vacation seemed in order after that project. But in cleaning out my studio I came to the first mud piece I'd done, without any rag or bamboo supports. I wanted to take it out and destroy it. It broke and fell on my right foot, and broke it. We went to Kashmir anyway, to Srinigar. Everyone lived on boats there, so I didn't have to walk much. It was perfect. We even made a little trip to the foothills of the Himalayas."

("...once you see a sari embroidered in gold trailing in the mud, you realize that everything is relative, that everything is acceptable and that you don't have to be afraid of beauty, either." -- RR to BRose).

Just

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~~India~~

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(1975)

Ivan never knew Bob well personally. Says they quarrelled when Bob wanted to repaint the White Paintings, to show he had anticipated Minimal Art. Ivan feels this was the low point in his career. Interesting ~~was~~ his new work is so feminine and delicate - the opposite of gritty, masculine early look.

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~~RRxxxxxxzEg~~

The Indians used Egyptian cotton that seemed in endless supply there - using it in the ashram to make paper pulp for account books, stationery, etc.

"From my first trip to India with Merce I'd been fascinated with mud, with the use of mud in architecture. Also from North Africa. I tried a few pieces, mixing my ^{own} compound, and I ended up using rag pulp and Egyptian cotton with clay and mud, a little creosote, and a lots of Indian spices as a binder -- they also killed the mildew, and made it more permanent.

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Karp

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RR78

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GEMINI G.E.L.

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

PUBLICONS

1978

Six Multiple Sculptures

I.D. NUMBER	TITLE/DESCRIPTION	DIMENSIONS	EDITION	PUBLICATION PRICE
RR78-2042	<u>PUBLICON - STATION I</u> Wood construction coated with automotive acrylic lacquer, with collaged silk and cotton fabrics, gold leafed paddle, baked epoxy enamel over polished aluminum, light bulbs, plexiglass	59" x 30" x 12" closed, expanding to 59" x 58" x 12"	30	\$ 7,500.
RR78-2044	<u>PUBLICON - STATION II</u> Wood construction coated with automotive acrylic lacquer, with collaged silk and cotton fabrics	36" x 36" x 14" closed, expanding to 36" x 45" x 14"	30	4,500.
RR78-2047	<u>PUBLICON - STATION III</u> Wood construction coated with automotive acrylic lacquer, with collaged silk and cotton fabrics, mirror extenders, baked epoxy enamel over polished aluminum	36½" x 31" x 15" closed, expanding to 69" x 64" x 15"	30	6,000.
RR78-2046	<u>PUBLICON - STATION IV</u> Wood construction coated with automotive acrylic lacquer, with collaged silk and cotton fabrics, bicycle wheel, baked epoxy enamel over polished aluminum, plexiglass, light bulb	28" x 36" x 13" closed, expanding to 52" x 64" x 13"	30	8,500.
RR78-2045	<u>PUBLICON - STATION V</u> Wood construction coated with automotive acrylic lacquer, with collaged silk and cotton fabrics, brick, baked epoxy enamel over polished aluminum, plexiglass, light bulb	18" x 36" x 8" closed, expanding to 18" x 59½" x 8"	30	3,200.
RR78-2043	<u>PUBLICON - STATION VI</u> Wood construction coated with automotive acrylic lacquer, with collaged silk and cotton fabrics, bottle caps	24" x 36" x 12"	30	1,800.

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GEMINI G.E.L.

8365 MELROSE AVENUE LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA 90069 213 651-0513

September 11, 1978

Calvin Tomkins
147 East 82nd Street
New York, New York 10028

Dear Calvin,

In April of this year, an entourage of Ron and Julie McPherson, Peter Carlson, Peter Wirth, Tony Zepeda, Sid Felsen and Stan Grinstein all departed for Bob Rauschenberg's studio on Captiva Island, Florida. After a few weeks of intensified collaboration, they returned home to Gemini with bicycle wheels, bricks from a neighbor's front yard, paddles, colored light bulbs, pieces of highly reflective colored aluminum, Florida bottle caps and many yards of exotic silk and cotton fabrics. The result of these weeks of work and all these materials is a series of six multiple sculptures called PUBLICONS, a word created by Bob Rauschenberg meaning 'icons for the public'.

The first PUBLICON, or PUBLICON - STATION I, is shaped like an enormous white metronome. As either one or both of the doors are opened, a blue light automatically comes on in the center of a 23k gold leafed paddle. The lining of the 'metronome' is a multicolored collage of fabrics and reflective aluminum, and a white light on the back of the paddle reflects off the blue aluminum at the bottom of the cabinet. The paddle hangs from a clear plexiglass tile at the top of the cabinet.

At first glance, the second PUBLICON, or PUBLICON - STATION II, is simply a large, square white box. The inside, however, provides a surprising contrast to this minimal exterior. Jutting out from the back of the door is a large, rhombic shape, covered by a pattern of checkered, striped, plaid and solid fabrics, and the void left in the back of the box by this rhombic shape is also completely covered by collaged fabrics.

By pulling down on the front of PUBLICON - STATION III, you unveil a myriad of colorful fabrics, dual magnification mirrors, and reflective aluminum. This sculpture has a number of possible arrangements, with the mirrors fully extended or partially extended, pulled to the sides or to the front. In addition to the reflective aluminum on the top and bottom of the cabinet's interior, there is a green reflective tile on the top of the box's exterior which creates, in a prism-like effect, a green halo on the wall above the piece.

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Page Two

The fourth PUBLICON, too, has a number of possible arrangements, with the front door up or down, and the side doors closed or slid open. The bicycle wheel, which can be spun freely, hangs on a background of fabrics and pieces of reflective aluminum, and above the wheel is a light bulb hidden behind a sheet of red plexiglass.

PUBLICON - STATION V has two doors that slide open and one flap that lifts up, revealing a spectrum of collaged fabrics and reflective aluminum, a red light bulb which can be left either on or off, and a brick hanging from a chain.

The sixth PUBLICON consists of five wooden boards, covered in a collage of fabrics on one side and painted in white on the other. Caps from bottles of Florida orange juice, beer and soda are nailed onto the boards and act as 'stoppers' in hanging the boards through the cut out in the horizontal board. As the caps are not located in the center of the boards, the height of the sculpture is changed by hanging the boards either 'long-side up' or 'short-side up'.

All of the PUBLICONS were conceived by Bob Rauschenberg to be hung from the wall. All areas not covered by fabric or reflective aluminum are painted in a white automotive acrylic laquer. Each piece within every PUBLICON edition is identical, down to the fabric, bicycle wheel, brick, 23k gold leafed paddle, bottle caps and even the special nails purchased in Florida. The edition size for each of the six sculptures is 30.

Further details regarding these six new multiples are on the data sheet and beneath each of the enclosed photographs. Please let me know if there is any additional information I can send, or if I can be of any assistance.

Warm regards,

Rob Felsen

Enclosures

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"I went to live and work in Israel, not because I'm Jewish but because I wanted contact with their instinct and struggle for survival." (ibid)

Re India: "... once you see a sari embroidered in gold trailing in the mud, you realize that everything is relative, that everything is acceptable and that you don't have to be afraid of beauty, either." (ibid)