

**CELEBRATING 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MOON LANDING
CRAIG F. STARR GALLERY EXHIBITION PRESENTS RAUSCHENBERG'S
RARELY SEEN WORKS DOCUMENTING THE APOLLO 11 MISSION**



Image caption: Robert Rauschenberg (1925–2008), *Drawing for Stoned Moon Book*, 1970. Solvent transfer with printed reproductions, photographs, and graphite on illustration board, 10 x 15 inches.

Robert Rauschenberg Foundation © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation / Licensed by VAGA, New York, N.Y.

**ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG: STONED MOON 1969-70
MAY 30 – JULY 26, 2019**

NEW YORK – In honor of the 50th anniversary of the historic July 20, 1969 moon landing, Craig F. Starr Gallery will present ***Robert Rauschenberg: Stoned Moon 1969-70***. Twenty drawings and two prints by Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008) will be on view May 30 through July 26.

A fully illustrated catalogue is in production and will be available in late July. The publication will feature the unpublished, rough draft essay Michael Crichton (1942-2008) wrote on Rauschenberg's Stoned Moon projects.

At NASA's invitation, Rauschenberg traveled to Cape Canaveral in July 1969 to witness the launch of Apollo 11, the first manned spaceflight to the moon's surface. The experience culminated in the creation of thirty-four *Stoned Moon* prints (1969-70), a *Stoned Moon Drawing* (1969), and a suite of nineteen collages and drawings for *Stoned Moon Book* (1970).

The NASA art program was established in 1962 to record the history of space exploration through the eyes of artists in an effort to make the space program more accessible to the public. Artists were given unprecedented access to sites and materials. Flight in general (birds, airplanes, parachutes) had long been of interest to Rauschenberg at least since the mid-50s, and spaceflight began appearing in his work in the early 60s with the concurrent NASA Mercury and then Gemini programs. Many of the charts,

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: KELLY MUNROE
212-570-1739
kelly@craigstarr.com

maps, and photographs included in the *Stoned Moon* lithographs, printed at Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles, were supplied by NASA. The show includes two of the best, most colorful works from the series, *Sky Garden* and *Banner* (both 1969).

Rauschenberg intended to produce an artist's book of his *Stoned Moon* Projects in an edition of 500. The book, which would have been square in format (maybe 13 x 13 inches), was to include the essay by Crichton with illustrations by Rauschenberg (the suite of nineteen collages and drawings) and reproductions of the series of *Stoned Moon* prints. The book was never published, and the nineteen unique works, now collectively known as the *Stoned Moon Book*, remained in the artist's collection and have rarely been seen or exhibited.

The collages and drawings that make up the *Stoned Moon Book* are comprised of NASA media images, solvent transfers, and photographs of Rauschenberg and the printers at work on the *Stoned Moon* series taken by photographer Malcolm Lubliner and Gemini G.E.L. co-owner Sidney Felsen. The four largest collages are widely accepted as what would have been front and back covers and the endpapers. Four of the pages are heavily collaged transfer drawings, while the remaining eleven are collages of images and fragments of texts by Rauschenberg and Henry T. Hopkins (then director of the Fort Worth Art Center). Rauschenberg's texts draw from his personal experiences visiting Florida to witness the launch, while Hopkins's writings reflect on the relationship between historic events and artistic representation.

This is the first time all nineteen collages and drawings that comprise the *Stoned Moon Book* will be on view at a New York gallery or museum. With the inclusion of the *Stoned Moon Drawing* (the composition of which is a summation of images and text documenting Rauschenberg's experience witnessing the Apollo 11 launch and the production of the print series) and the series of prints represented by *Sky Garden* and *Banner*, the exhibition brings all three of Rauschenberg's *Stoned Moon* Projects into one show. **Robert Rauschenberg: Stoned Moon 1969-70** is made possible by loans from the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation and a private collection.

Craig F. Starr Gallery is located at 5 East 73rd Street between Fifth and Madison Avenues. Gallery hours are 11am to 5pm, Monday through Saturday in June and Monday – Friday in July and August. For more information, please contact the gallery at 212-570-1739 or visit craigstarr.com.

###