For Sale 17 Acres, from Rusty Signs

Ed Ruscha

Date : 2014
Mixograph on handmade paper
24 x 24 in.
Edition of 85
Pencil signed, dated and numbered

Artist bio

Edward Ruscha has remained an important figure in American art since the early 1960's when his artwork first came to the fore as part of the West Coast Pop Art movement. Since that time, he has continued to develop his signature style, which combines words and images on the same visual field. By doing so, visual and verbal means of communication coexist and create a sense of friction. The words conjure mental images that do not necessarily describe what the eye actually sees in the painting.

A painter, printmaker, and filmmaker, Edward Ruscha was born in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1937, and lived some 15 years in Oklahoma City before moving permanently to Los Angeles where he studied at the Chouinard Art Institute from 1956 through 1960. By the early sixties he was well known for his paintings, collages, and printmaking, and for his association with the Ferus Gallery group, which also included artists Robert Irwin, Edward Moses, Ken Price, and Edward Kienholz. He later achieved recognition for his paintings incorporating words and phrases and for his many photographic books, all influenced by the deadpan irreverence of the Pop Art movement.

Ruscha has a talent for making the banal seem significant. He often reduces his subject to the minimum amount of detail needed for identification. Places and structures are often depicted as shadows. Ruscha is interested in language, and how that language can describe but not depict space. Words have been present in many of Ruscha's paintings, often occupying the whole canvas. What they say is always clear. but what they mean is more ambiguous.

A major retrospective of Ruscha's career opened at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. in June 2000 and traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, The Miami Art Museum, and the Modern Art Museum of Ft. Worth, TX. In 2001 Ruscha was elected to The American Academy of Arts and Letters as a member of the Department of Art. Ruscha's work has been exhibited internationally for three decades and is represented in major museum collections. Among his other public commissions are a mural commissioned for the Miami-Dade Public Library, Miami, Florida (1985 and 1989); and for the Great Hall of the Denver Central Library, Colorado (1994-95). Ruscha is represented in Los Angeles by Gagosian Gallery and in New York by Leo Castelli Gallery. In 2004, The Whitney Museum of American Art exhibited an Ed Ruscha drawing retrospective, "Cotton Puffs, Q-tips®, Smoke and Mirrors: The Drawings of Ed Ruscha".

At the invitation of the U.S Department of State, four distinguished American museums recommended noted American artist Ed Ruscha to represent the United States at the 2005 Venice Biennale. The group consisted of the directors and curatorial representatives of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of the Smithsonian Institution, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Mr. Ruscha nominated Linda Norden, the Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University, to serve as curator of his exhibition. The U.S. Department of State approved these recommendations.