

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

July 19, 2016

ED RUSCHA
BOOKS & CO.

JULY 28–SEPTEMBER 9, 2016

OPENING RECEPTION:
THURSDAY, JULY 28, 6–8PM

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
456 NORTH CAMDEN DRIVE
BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90210
WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM



Gagosian Gallery is pleased to present “Ed Ruscha Books & Co.,” an exhibition of artists' books by and after Ed Ruscha. The exhibition is organized by Gagosian director Bob Monk.

In the 1960s, Ruscha was credited with reinventing the artist's book, producing and self-publishing a series of slim volumes of photography and text. By turning away from the craftsmanship and luxury status that typified the *livre d'artiste* in favor of the artistic idea or concept, expressed simply and in editions that were unsigned and inexpensively printed, Ruscha opened the genre to the possibilities of mass-production and distribution. “Ed Ruscha Books & Co.” presents Ruscha's iconic books together with those of more than one hundred artists from all over the world—from Russia to Japan to the Netherlands—who have responded directly and diversely to his lead. Many books are installed so that viewers can browse their pages. After presentations in New York, Munich and Paris (2013–15) the exhibition run will conclude in Ruscha's home city of Los Angeles. The exhibition will be presented in conjunction with “Ed Ruscha Prints and Photographs.”

Inspired by the unassuming books that he found in street stalls during a trip to Europe, Ruscha published his first artist book in 1962, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* under his own imprint, National Excelsior Press. Priced at \$3.50, it is exactly what its title suggests: twenty-six photographs of gas stations with captions indicating brand and location. Initially, the book was received with indifference, and was even rejected by the Library of Congress for its “unorthodox form and supposed lack of information.” However, over time it acquired cult status, and by the 1980s it was hailed as one of the first truly modern artist books. Ruscha followed this up with a succession of similarly self-evident and deadpan photographic books chronicling aspects of Los Angeles, or his round-trip drives between Los Angeles and Oklahoma, including *Some Los Angeles Apartment* (1965), *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass* (1968), and *Real Estate Opportunities* (1970). Their use of photography as a form of map-making or topographical study signals a conceptual, rather than documentary, thrust.

2016 marks the fiftieth anniversary of *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966)—the 25-foot long, accordion-folded book. One of his most iconic artist books of all time, the past half-century has seen the importance and meaning of this book expand and evolve, pulled into new light by changing historical contexts, yet always retaining an enigmatic influence over new generations of artists. His artist books have been deeply influential on peers and followers—from Bruce Nauman's *Burning Small Fires* (1968), where Nauman burned a copy of Ruscha's *Various Small Fires and Milk* (1964) and photographed the process; to Julie Cook's *Some Las Vegas Strip Club* (2008), which turns the lights on nocturnal haunts.

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In *Rew-Shay Hood Project XIV* (2008–11), the British artist Jonathan Monk airbrushed a car hood with the image of *Rimmy Jim's Chevron, Rimmy Jim's, Arizona*, borrowed from *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*, remaking the book-based photograph in an industrial form. For the first time in this exhibition, nine works will be shown from Amy Park's *Ed Ruscha's Every Building on the Sunset Strip*, an ambitious series in which the entirety of Ruscha's original artist book is enlarged and rendered delicately in watercolor, refining and refracting the images, fifty years after the fact—watercolor having been widely used as the preferred medium to document building elevations and topography pre-photography. Mark McEvoy has created *Utopian Slumps*, a suite of seven prints that are “foxed,” or distressed book covers of Ruscha's books, the titles having been changed to plays on the originals—*Some Los Angeles Apartments* becomes *Some Losers Apartment* and *Nine Swimming Pools* is changed to *Pissing in Pools*. This irreverent homage carries over in John Waters's *12 Assholes and a Dirty Foot* and Louisa Vanleer's *Fifteen Pornography Companies*. Theo Wujcik, meanwhile, has created etchings of lounging figures who have fallen asleep reading Ruscha's books—and Dave Dyment made a painstakingly researched book called *Every Building in the Sunset Strip*, using Ruscha's accordion format, which chronicles stories about the history of every location photographed in Ruscha's original. As this celebratory exhibition attests, the pace at which working artists continue to pay homage to Ruscha, and the intimacy of the book and print medium as he defined it, continues to grow. At play here is not just Ruscha's long legacy, but also the continued impulse of young and contemporary artists to produce works that are tactile and immediate: in many cases hand-made and unique books, in the face of the pervasive presence of mass produced and distributed images. Ruscha's magnetism intensifies as artists from different generations and cultural contexts discover his books, outspreading into related areas of artistic endeavor.

Ed Ruscha was born in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1937. His work is collected by museums worldwide. Recent solo museum exhibitions include “Cotton Puffs, Q-Tips®, Smoke and Mirrors: The Drawings of Ed Ruscha,” Whitney Museum of American Art (2004, travelled to The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., in 2005); “Ed Ruscha,” MAXXI, Rome (2004); “Ed Ruscha: Photographer,” Jeu de Paume, Paris (2006, travelled to Kunsthau Zürich; and Museum Ludwig, Cologne, in 2006); “Ed Ruscha: Fifty Years of Painting,” Hayward Gallery, London (2009–10, travelled to Haus der Kunst, Munich; and Moderna Museet, Stockholm, in 2010); “Ed Ruscha: Road Tested,” The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas (2011); “On the Road,” Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2011, travelled to Denver Art Museum, Colorado, in 2011–12; and Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, in 2012); “Reading Ed Ruscha,” Kunsthau Bregenz, Austria (2012); “Artist Rooms on Tour: Ed Ruscha,” Tate Modern, London (2009, travelled to Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, United Kingdom, in 2010; Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, United Kingdom, in 2012; and The Hatton Gallery, Newcastle, United Kingdom, in 2013, among other venues); “Ed Ruscha: Standard,” Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2012–13, travelled to The Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, in 2013); “Ed Ruscha-Los Angeles Apartments,” Kunstmuseum Basel (2013); “In Focus: Ed Ruscha,” The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2013); “Ed Ruscha: Mixmaster,” Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Torino (2015-16). In 2012, Ruscha curated “The Ancients Stole All Our Great Ideas” at Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien in Austria. Ruscha represented the United States in the 51st Biennale di Venezia in 2005, and was featured in the 2015 Biennale de Lyon's exhibition, “La Vie Moderne.”

In July 2016, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco will open a major solo exhibition of Ed Ruscha at the de Young museum. “Ed Ruscha and the Great American West” will feature more than eighty works spanning the artist's career, exploring his attachments to the sights and scenes of the iconic landscape.

For further information please contact Alexandra Magnuson at alex@gagosian.com or at +1.310.271.9400. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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Image: *Rimmy Jim's Chevron, Rimmy Jim's Arizona*, 1962 from the book *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*. © Ed Ruscha.

Gagosian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagorian

ARTISTS IN EXHIBITION

Noriko Ambe
Ammany Ahmad
Pascal Anders
Edgar Arceneaux
Eduardo Arias
Eric Baskauskas
Ben Barretto
Luke Batten
Doro Boehme
Jeff Brouws
Joanna Brown
Denise Scott Brown
Wendy Burton
Corrine Carlson
Dan Colen
Julie Cook
Kim Corbel
Jennifer Dalton
Claudia De La Torre
Sergio De La Torre
Jen Denike
Eric Doeringer
Dave Dymant
Frank Eye
Kota Ezawa
Jan Freuchen
Thomas Galler
Anne-Valerie Gasc
Steve Giasson
Oliver Griffin
Daniel S. Guy
Dejan Habicht
Marcella Hackbardt
Sebastian Hackenschmidt
Karen Henderson
Mishka Henner
Trevor Hernandez
Kai-Olaf Hesse
Marla Hlady
Takashi Homma
Dominik Hruza
Steven Izenour
Sveinn Fannar Jóhannsson
Charles Johnstone
Gregory Eddie Jones
Rinata Kajumova
Henning Kappenburg
Shohachi Kimura
Sarah Kisner
Joachim Koester
David Kregenow
Hubert Krschmer
Sowon Kwon
Tanja Lazetic
Gabriel Lester
Giulio Maffei
Jochen Manz
Michael Maranda
Catherine Martin

Matthieu Martin
Scott Mccarney
Mark McEvoy
Jerry Mcmillan
Daniel Mellis
Martin Moll
Dan Monick
Jonathan Monk
Simon Morris
Maurizio Nannucci
Bruce Nauman
Philip Nolde
John O'Brian
Stefan Olah
Matthew Papa
Amy Park
Michalis Pischler
Tadej Podačar
Susan Porteous
Joseph Putrock
Clara Prioux
Hassan Rahim
Achim Riechers
Craig Ritchie
Mark Ruwedel
Tom Sachs
Jonathan Sadler
Zoë Sadokierski
Travis Shaffer
David Schoerner
Andreas Schmidt
Joachim Schmid
Jean-Frédéric Schnyder
Yann Sérandour
Travis Shaffer
Izet Sheshivari
Kim Stringfellow
Chaddy Dean Smith
Eric Sole
Tom Sowden
Derek Sullivan
Yoshikazu Suzuki
Chris Svensson
Aggie Toppins
Marc Valesella
Louisa Van Leer
Robert Venturi
Frank Verdier
Reinhard Voigt
John Waters
Henry Wessel
M. Earl Williams
Keith Wilson
Theo Wujcik
Hermann Zschigner