

Major exhibition features rare, locally-held artworks by Robert Rauschenberg



FORT MYERS, FL.- Florida Southwestern State College opened “RAUSCHENBERG at 100: As Large as the World is,” a landmark exhibition celebrating the birth centenary of the legendary artist, Gallery-namesake and longtime local Captiva Island resident, Robert “Bob” Rauschenberg.

Running through May 2, 2026, this exhibition serves as the first solo Rauschenberg show curated specifically for the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery Annex space (J-118). The title is drawn from the artist’s own deeply-held belief and profound philosophy on the interconnectedness of local and global perspectives: “Fort Myers is as small as your mind is. It can be just as large as the world is.”

Exhibition Highlights: From Captiva to the Moon

The exhibition focuses on the artist’s deep ties to Southwest Florida, featuring locally-produced and privately-held works—most never before exhibited and spanning several pivotal decades of his career, including:

- “Autobiography” (1968): A monumental “self portrait” triptych created the same year that Rauschenberg purchased his first property and home on Captiva Island.
- Unique paintings and transfer drawings: featuring original works from the acclaimed SPREADS, BOREALIS, ANAGRAM, and RUNT series.
- The “MOON MUSEUM” (1969): A tiny but mighty collective artwork featuring contributions from Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol and others. Covertly attached to the Apollo 12 lunar lander and later described as “the smallest piece I have ever made” and “also the farthest away,” as Rauschenberg recalled, “I made a piece that is approx. 1” x ½” [that] was flown to the Moon by NASA and stored there for future discovery.”

A Legacy of Peace and Collaboration

The exhibition also honors Rauschenberg’s role as a global diplomat. Between 1984 and 1991, he launched the Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (ROCI) at the United Nations. By bringing art to nations such as Cuba, Chile, Tibet, China and the Soviet Union

during the height of the Cold War, Rauschenberg used the creative process to transcend political borders, foster cross-cultural understanding and to promote world peace.

As Pulitzer Prize-winning art critic Jerry Saltz famously remarked, "Robert Rauschenberg was not a giant of American art; he was the giant."