



## Robert Rauschenberg: *Making Tracks* *The Complete Tracks and Made in Tampa Clay Pieces*

September 24th – November 8th, 2015

Opening Reception Thursday, September 24th, 6-8 pm

Jim Kempner Fine Art is pleased to announce *Making Tracks: The Complete Tracks and Made in Tampa Clay Pieces*. The exhibition will show the Tracks series in its entirety for the first time in the United States (last shown in Basel 1976). It will also include all five of the *Made in Tampa Clay Pieces*. The exhibition, which brings together works from both private collections and public institutions, is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalog with an essay by Rauschenberg scholar Robert S. Mattison (author of *Robert Rauschenberg: Breaking Boundaries*) and an interview with Rauschenberg's collaborator Alan Eaker.

Robert Rauschenberg was at the leading edge of postwar American art, exploring the innovative possibilities of nontraditional materials and ushering in a renaissance of printmaking. Throughout his career, Rauschenberg collaborated with numerous talented individuals who had the technical abilities to enhance his ideas and aid his exploration. One such technician was ceramicist Alan Eaker, a central figure in the production of these clay works. Then a professor at the University of South Florida, Tampa, Eaker collaborated with Graphicstudio and Rauschenberg to work through the unusual problem of how to fabricate the idea of cardboard boxes in clay. *Made in Tampa* marks Rauschenberg's earliest Graphicstudio project, executed in 1972.



*Tampa Clay Piece 1, 1972.*  
Clay with screen-printed lacquer decals and soil patina.  
14 1/2 x 15 1/2 x 3/4". Edition 20.

Several years after the *Made in Tampa* project, Eaker spent several intense weeks with Rauschenberg at his Captiva compound in Florida to produce the entire edition of Tracks. The Tracks series from 1976 consists of six variations, each executed in a small edition ranging from eleven to eighteen castings, and one unique work. The suite resulted from Rauschenberg impressing tire tracks into clay slabs laid out on plywood boards. Once the tire tracks were impressed and Rauschenberg had cut the edges of each piece, manipulating them with his thumbs, Eaker made molds from the clay reliefs. Dirt and resin were cast into each mold, and fiberglass was added to reinforce the rear side. In *Route*, *Stretch*, and *Hound*, the six to eight-foot pieces that incorporate both the floor and the wall, Eaker hung the uncured resin and fiberglass over the edge of a table and allowed the mixture to harden.

*Tracks* was produced under the agency of Pyramid Arts, founded by Donald Saff, Alan Eaker, and Arnold Levine. The suite is exemplary of Rauschenberg's ability to coalesce art with the relics of contemporary life. The exhibition catalogue *Making Tracks*, published by Jim Kempner Fine Art, will include unpublished photographs collected from the archives of Rauschenberg's collaborators. The Rauschenberg Foundation and Graphicstudio in Tampa, FL have contributed additional images and information essential to the catalog. Jim Kempner Fine Art is delighted to help inaugurate the celebration of Robert Rauschenberg's 90th birthday and to honor the extreme bounds to which he pushed his creative genius.

Participate in the discussion with Jim Kempner Fine Art on Twitter (@JimKempnerFA), Facebook (@JimKempnerFineArt), and Instagram (@JimKempnerFineArt), using the hashtags #RobertRauschenberg #MakingTracks #JimKempnerFineArt.

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*Realm (Tracks), 1976.*  
Clay, dirt, resin, and fiberglass with a wet soil patina.  
30 1/4 x 36 3/4". Total castings 18.