

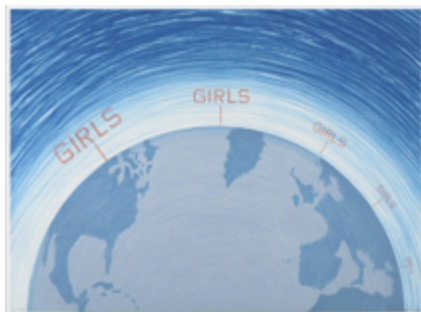
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Ed Ruscha | Editions

April 9 – May 14, 2016

Leslie Sacks Gallery is pleased to announce its forthcoming exhibition *Ed Ruscha Editions*. The exhibition will present recent and vintage editions by internationally renowned, Los Angeles based artist, Ed Ruscha. Iconic imagery from 1982 through 2015 will be on view demonstrating Ruscha's wide-ranging visual vocabulary and subject matter of quizzical text, static objects and street intersections. This particular collection of works is an insightful glimpse into Ed Ruscha's enduring relationship with printmaking over his decades long career.



In 1982 Ruscha printed five lithographs comprising the *World Series* with renowned atelier, Gemini G.E.L. The series title alone nods to his characteristic wordplay, while each image is titled at the most literal level. Featured in this exhibition are two examples from this series, *Girls* (pictured left) and a rare color trial proof of *It's Recreational*. Both are compelling examples of Ruscha's animation-style, which suggests a kind of accelerated movement and spinning of the composition. The rare color trial proof of *It's Recreational* gives insight into the artist's working process. Unlike the final editioned image, the proof bears a spectrum of bold color streaking horizontally across the sheet and the text hovering at center reads 'Recreation'. It provokes unto itself numerous interpretations, but in contrast to the final printing one is now compelled to contemplate even further the ideas at play between the two.

One of Ruscha's most recognizable, non-text subjects is the ship -- a shadowy silhouette of a schooner vessel at full mast at sea. Between 1983 and 1988 Ruscha created a dozen or so compositions of this subject in a variety of media from painting to print. Included in this exhibition is the first lithograph Ruscha created of this iconic subject. *Ship*, 1986 printed at the Tamarind Institute, is a stunning, large-scale depiction awash in a hazy, sepia toned palette. Although conveying a distinctly period and vintage quality, Ruscha was inspired by the contemporary process of airbrushing, which he was employing at the time to make his paintings. He found that this technique would translate quite successfully in printmaking by airbrushing automotive lacquer directly onto the lithographic plates.



Ed Ruscha makes work graphic in nature exhibiting a deep interest in linguistics, particularly the vernacular, and how it pertains to both the reality and perception of humanity. "When I began painting, all my paintings were of words which were guttural utterances like Smash, Boss, Eat," Ruscha has said. "Those words were like flowers in a vase; I just happened to paint words like someone else paints flowers." Difficult to classify, critics have never been able to place Ruscha within a single classic art historical genre or style. His work bears characteristics of numerous movements such as Pop art, Dada, Conceptual art and Surrealism. Curator, Donna De Salvo of The Whitney Museum of American Art once explained, "I would never say Ed's work is 'about' something. The genius of it is that he takes something incredibly familiar and gives it this level of ambiguity."¹ Although he does not paint figurative imagery, one can feel the human presence through his judiciously selected words.

Ed Ruscha was born in Omaha, Nebraska in 1937. He studied painting, photography, and graphic design at the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles (now CalArts). His work is collected ritually by every esteemed art museum worldwide. Selected public collections include: The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, the San Diego Museum of Arts, San Diego, CA, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands, Frederick R Weisman Art Foundation, Los Angeles, CA, the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France, the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, CA, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, CA, Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, TX, the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, The National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC, the High Museum, Atlanta, GA, Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C., Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL, Tate Gallery, London, UK, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH, Museum of Modern Art, NY and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA.

Leslie Sacks Gallery is located in the Bergamot Station Arts Center in Santa Monica (2525 Michigan Avenue, B6). Gallery hours are Tues-Fri 10-6, Sat 11-6. The gallery is online at lesliesacks.com. Email gALLERY@lesliesacks.com or call 310 264 0640. *Hi resolution jpeg's available upon request.*

¹ Calvin Tomkins, *Ed Ruscha's L.A.*, The New Yorker, July 1, 2013.