

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE September 24, 2019

**ACA GALLERIES PRESENTS JOHN MELLENCAMP AND ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG**  
**BINDING WIRES**  
**October 24 through December 21, 2019**

Exhibition catalogue available with essay by Mary Lynn Kotz



Robert Rauschenberg, *Casino (Anagrams)*, 1996, Vegetable dye transfer on paper

**New York, NY** – We are pleased to announce a 2-man exhibition featuring artworks by **John Mellencamp** and **Robert Rauschenberg**. The exhibition, *Binding Wires* will open at **ACA Galleries** on **Thursday, October 24, 2019** in New York. This exhibition investigates the dynamic juxtapositions of two bodies of work: Mellencamp's sculptural assemblages and portraits alongside Rauschenberg's mixed media artworks.

As Mary Lynn Kotz writes in her essay, *born in the 20th century, a generation apart, Robert Rauschenberg and John Mellencamp are driven by the art imperative. They absolutely have to create! Where this need comes from is a mystery; but what feeds their souls embellishes our lives. That swiftly-changing century's powerful events and its styles offered different circumstances to each: One man going through lean years of the Depression and then war; and the other through the boom of*

*America's post-war years. As children, both boys started to draw and create and both were inspired—but also discouraged—by their parents. Their inherent creativity deepened, to make art that propelled them away from their childhood homes. As artists, their national reputations were forged in New York, but both grew up far away in the heart of America.* Both artists use collage and assemblage to powerful narrative effect and employ a vast array of found, conventional and nontraditional art making materials. *Binding Wires* demonstrates how each combines seemingly disparate elements to form a cohesive whole and make potent visual statements. This exhibition is produced in association with Eckert Fine Art and curated by Mikaela Lamarche.

### **About John Mellencamp**

Born and raised in Seymour, Indiana, Mellencamp is an acclaimed singer-songwriter and musician, as well as an accomplished painter and long-time activist. He started painting at an early age, influenced by his mother, also an artist. Mellencamp studied briefly at the Arts Students League in New York, where he discovered the work of Twentieth-Century Modernists. As his musical career flourished, he began to paint earnestly in the 1980s with an early affinity for portraiture influenced by the works of Otto Dix and Max Beckmann. He is a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, recipient of The Woody Guthrie Award, the John Steinbeck Award, ASCAP Foundation's Champion Award, the Americana Music Association's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Founders Award and co-founder of Farm Aid – a nonprofit organization whose mission is to keep family farmers on the land.



John Mellencamp, *Women's Rights*, 2019, Mixed Media Mirror, 80 x 104 inches

John Mellencamp Paintings & Assemblages - [www.johnmellencampart.com](http://www.johnmellencampart.com) | [@johnmellencamp](https://www.instagram.com/johnmellencamp)



### **About Robert Rauschenberg**

Robert Rauschenberg (1925 – 2008) worked in a wide range of subjects, styles, materials, and techniques throughout his career. He has been called a forerunner of nearly every postwar movement since Abstract Expressionism, although he remained independent of any particular affiliation. When he began making art in the late 1940s and early 50s, his belief that “painting relates to both art and life” presented a direct challenge to the prevalent modernist aesthetic.

The celebrated Combines, begun in the mid-1950s, brought real-world images and objects into the realm of abstract painting and broke down the divisions between painting and sculpture. Rauschenberg’s lifelong commitment to collaboration—with performers, printmakers, engineers, writers, artists, and artisans from around the world—is a further manifestation of his expansive artistic philosophy.

*This text is adapted from an essay written by Julia Blaut, “Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective,” @Guggenheim (Fall 1997). (From the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation)*

### **About ACA GALLERIES**

Since 1932 the American Contemporary Art Gallery (ACA) has been at the vanguard of American Art. As one of the oldest galleries in New York, its pioneering interest in progressive art was established early on in exhibitions, often introducing the work of artists Giorgio Cavallon, Aaron Douglas, Philip Evergood, Rockwell Kent, Alice Neel, Barnett Newman, Irene Rice Pereira, David Smith, Theodoros Stamos and Charles White, among many others. Over the decades the gallery’s scope and inventory expanded to include masterworks from the Renaissance to 19<sup>th</sup> century, Modern and Contemporary American and European painting, sculpture and photography. Today, ACA Galleries continues to break new ground, supporting new artists, representing established artists and distinguished estates; and presenting several exhibitions per year that honor the gallery’s deep historical roots by re-imagining them in a contemporary context.

[www.acagalleries.com](http://www.acagalleries.com) | [@acagalleries1932](https://www.instagram.com/acagalleries1932)

### **About Eckert Fine Art**

Jane Coats Eckert’s roots are in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American artists, on whom she wrote and lectured. In 1996, she opened Eckert Fine Art in Naples, Florida, where she formed a business relationship and friendship with Robert Rauschenberg, traveling with him to such venues as the Guggenheim, the Bilbao and the Musee d’Art moderne et d’Art contemporain, Nice. She curated shows on Rauschenberg at three museums, mounted numerous exhibitions on his works, including one reuniting him with his BMW art car, in 1992 in an exhibition called Beamers. She is the past Chair of the Director’s Advisory Council at Mass Moca, served as Secretary of the Fine Art Dealers Association and was named one of the 25 Most Influential People in Litchfield, CT in 2017.

### **ACA Galleries**

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### **Hours**

Tuesday – Saturday: 11am – 6pm  
Sunday – Monday: By Appointment Only

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