

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

14 March 2016

ED RUSCHA MOUNTAIN PRINTS

APRIL 6–MAY 28, 2016

OPENING RECEPTION:
TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 6–8PM

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
19 PLACE DE LONGEMALLE
1204 GENEVA
WWW.GAGOSIAN.COM



I had a notion to make pictures by using words and presenting them in some way and it seemed like a mountain was an archetypal stage set. It was a perfect foil for whatever was happening in the foreground.
—Ed Ruscha

Gagosian Geneva is pleased to present the first exhibition exclusively devoted to Ed Ruscha's *Mountain Prints*.

More than ten years after the original motif appeared in the distinctive *Mountain* paintings, Ruscha began producing complementary prints in 2010. "Mountain Prints" comprises color trial, separation, and cancellation proofs, as well as numbered editions from the limited-edition series; it is a rare opportunity to witness Ruscha's processual experiments in the print medium.

While attending Chouinard Art Institute (now CalArts) in 1958, Ruscha began an apprenticeship with Saul Marks at Plantin Press in Los Angeles, summoned to the print medium by a desire for experimental collaboration and a commitment to reproducibility. Since 1960, screenprints, lithographs, and etchings have been a key part of his oeuvre. After a collaboration over many decades, Ruscha established Hamilton Press with Tamarind master printer Ed Hamilton in 1990 to focus on traditional lithography. *Mountain Prints* suggests the ways in which the open exchange of skills and insights has impacted his punchy compositions.

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The prints on view are both works from the numbered edition as well as proofs produced between 2010 and 2015 at Hamilton Press. Square-format paper accentuates the central placement of text, each word occupying a new line in contrast to the perspectival recession of the snow-capped mountains. Ruscha has superimposed text upon landscape in his paintings since the 1980s, juxtaposing the symbolic stimulus of the image with text as an atmosphere of speech, sound, and shape. In *Mountain Prints*, cryptic and humorously banal phrases in white letters, such as "Sponge Puddle" and "Bliss Bucket," interrupt the harmony of the stock scenic backdrop. The print process imbues the landscape image with a granular, graphic tactility amplified by vivid combinations of cerulean and cobalt blue, plum, pewter, tawny, and tangerine inks. Subtle mutations between prints recount the active and constant negotiation between artist and printer, author and craftsman. Like the partnership between Hamilton and Ruscha, the achievement of the *Mountain Prints* proofs is their merger of content and form.

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. "Ed Ruscha and the Great American West" will feature more than 80 works spanning the artist's career, exploring his attachments to the sights and scenes of the iconic landscape.

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Image: *Jet Baby*, 2011, lithograph, 29 × 28 inches (73.7 × 71.1 cm), Color Trial Proof 15. © Edward Ruscha. Photo by Alan Shaffer.

Gagosian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagosian.