

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Sarah Andress, "Rirkrit Tiravanija," *Art in Print*, February, 2012

Art in Print

Rirkrit Tiravanija

Untitled 2008-2011 (the map of the land of feeling) I-III, (2011)

Archival inkjet print, offset lithography, chine collé, color silkscreen, 36 x 33 1/2 inches, edition of 40, printed and published by the Leroy Neiman Center for Print Studies, Columbia University, New York. \$18,000–\$22,500 per scroll.

Rirkrit Tiravanija was born in Buenos Aires, educated in Bangkok, Canada, and New York, and currently resides in Bangkok, New York, and Berlin, so it is not surprising that this printed chronicle of his travels sprawls 81 feet. The ambitious project, proposed in 2008 to the Neiman Print Center at Columbia University, where Tiravanija is professor, and completed three years later with the help of dozens of student participants, documents only the most recent twenty years of his career.

Running through the center of each of the three prints (each of which is 27 feet long) are the pages of the passports he has held over the past two decades, set edge to edge. This central strip—with its formal echo of Robert

Rauschenberg's *Automobile Tire Print* (1953)—is elaborated with drawings, fragments of writing, city plans of places he has been, and patterns that tell both personal stories and more universal ones.

It is in some ways an oddly monumental project for an artist best known for producing events rather than objects. One of the most visible practitioners of "relational art", Tiravanija had fed people meals, offered up reading rooms, and engineered spaces for social interaction. When objects are involved, as in his on-site custom t-shirt printshop installation at Gavin Brown's enterprise last spring, the objects are best understood as props for transactions, with the art content being loaded on the transaction rather than on the souvenir you take home.

In this print the tables would appear to be flipped, given its extravagant square footage and all the materials, time, money, supplies and effort that has been invested in these things. But these 'things' are prints, and all that investment took place in exactly

the kind of transactional situation that Tiravanija pursues his art. Printshops are social spaces, built for collaboration. Academic print shops even more so. Yes, the prints are dynamic, visually fascinating and physically impressive artifacts. But they are also the result of dozens of people coming and going, with and without the artist's presence, exchanging knowledge, ideas, materials, markings; colluding in the production of something that, once again, may not be the real point.

(For an in-depth discussion of this project, see Faye Hirsch, "Rirkrit Tiravanija," *Art in America*, June 2011.) ■

—Sarah Andress



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