

GLADSTONE

Arjun Sajip, "The shows to see in and around New York this month," *Apollo*, May 6, 2025

APOLLO

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Twin Bloom / ROCI TIBET (1985), Robert Rauschenberg. Photo: Ron Amstutz; courtesy Robert Rauschenberg Foundation/Gladstone Gallery; © Robert Rauschenberg/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

With hundreds of exhibitions and events vying for attention in New York during Frieze and TEFAF, Apollo's editors pick out the shows they wouldn't want to miss

Though he referred to himself simply as an 'American painter of signs', the man born Robert Clark in the state of Indiana in 1928 had a knack for reinvention. His most famous 'sign', a print of the word LOVE in bold red type with neutral blue and green filling the space between the letters (1964), asserts the word's power even as it deconstructs it. Though the work's ubiquity in subsequent years has threatened to diminish its effect, Indiana made countless other pieces combining words and images in ways that make us think twice about the signs and symbols that surround us. 'Robert Indiana: The American Dream', an exhibition at Pace Gallery (9 May–15 August), collects paintings and sculptures by the artist ranging from the 1960s to the 2010s. Some of the works derive power from their straightforwardness: The Calumet (1961) presents the names of 14 Indigenous tribes stencilled in bold circles, as if simply to assert their existence at a time when much of the American media was ignoring, justifying or glorifying their genocide. There are more ambivalent pieces too: Indiana's sculpture The American Dream (1992/2015) comprises the words 'HUG', 'ERR', 'EAT' and 'DIE' painted on a bronze tower – a summation of human existence that somehow seems stark and comforting at the same time. – Arjun Sajip

Robert Rauschenberg is arguably the greatest exponent of the art of found objects since Marcel Duchamp, his paintings brimming with found images and his 'combines' marshalling everything from newspaper clippings to light bulbs, electric fans, wooden doors and stuffed Angora goats. Perhaps because so much of his work blurs the lines between painting, drawing, sculpture and installation, comparatively little critical attention has been given to his sculptures as sculptures. (The most recent show to focus purely on his sculptural work was in 1995 at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.) Gladstone Gallery is marking the centenary of the artist's birth with an ambitious display of his sculptures, the very best of which harness what he called 'abandoned objects' – from scrap metal to broken chairs and decorative items – that seem random at first but coalesce into a strange kind of logic (until 14 June).