

THE ORIGINAL ORIGINATOR Professional Beginnings for Professional Artists

In conjunction with the exhibition *James Rosenquist: A Retrospective*, artist James Rosenquist offered a rare, multi-session workshop geared to artists beginning their professional careers. The workshop included lectures, painting demonstrations, and specific assignments that enabled participants to learn about Rosenquist's working process, color basics, the mechanics of beginning painting, and the fundamentals of starting a studio with limited resources and judicious use of materials. The four-part course culminated with a studio assignment under the direction of the artist and a presentation of student work in the exhibition gallery of the Sackler Center.

Highlights of the course included Rosenquist re-creating a makeshift studio in the Sackler Center and sharing the most effective materials and tools for setting up a studio on what he referred to as "nickels and dimes." Throughout the course, and consistent with aspects of his own training, Rosenquist emphasized imparting "union trade school information that

you probably can't get anywhere else." From the most practical and efficient means for cleaning palettes and storing paintbrushes to tips on how to get the maximum mileage from one tube of paint, participants had the opportunity to learn trade secrets from a master painter. A favorite was his session on color theory and effective techniques for blending paint. With an eight-foot canvas tacked to the wall, he demonstrated his blending techniques with ease and swiftness, and then let students try their hands at it.

Armed with the inspiration of these initial lecture demonstrations, participants returned to their studios over a monthlong hiatus to create artwork informed by the techniques, artistic practices, and color theory applications Rosenquist shared during the course. An exhibition of their work along with source materials and working drawings were then presented in the Sackler Center. A lively reception for the artist participants and their families and friends with the master teacher in attendance culminated the course.

ROSENQUIST SHARING TRADE SECRETS WITH STUDENTS. PHOTO BY CHI CHI UBINO.



“I couldn't believe such a master was so accessible.”

—Student participant in *The Original Originator*