

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Invisible Man
(After Ralph Ellison), 2000
Matte acrylic, book pages on canvas, 120 x 120"

Where are We Going? Chaos or Community?
(After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008
Matte acrylic, book pages on canvas, 72 x 96"

I Have A Dream
(After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008
Matte acrylic, book pages on rag board, 24 X 24"

Suffering and Faith
(After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008
Matte acrylic, book pages on canvas, 72 x 72"

The Red Badge of Courage
(After Stephen Crane), 2008
Mulberry paper, acrylic, india ink, watercolor, collage, book pages on canvas, 72 x 96"

The Red Badge Of Courage
(After Stephen Crane), 2008
Watercolor, abaca paper, collage, vintage book page on rag paper. Twelve elements 7 x 4.5" each.
Made in collaboration with Syracuse youth from Fowler and Nottingham high schools.

Letter From Birmingham Jail III
(After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008
Matte acrylic on book pages on canvas, 70 X 90"
Made in collaboration with Syracuse youth from Fowler and Nottingham high schools.

Chaos Or Community?
(After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008
Matte acrylic, book pages on canvas, 72 X 96"
Made in collaboration with Syracuse youth from Fowler and Nottingham high schools.

I See The Promised Land
(After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008
Digital video projection 17' X 11'
Made in collaboration with Syracuse youth from Fowler and Nottingham high schools.

I See the Promised Land
(After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008
Matte acrylic, pencil on book pages directly adhered to gallery wall. Seven elements, 9 x 6" each.
Made in collaboration with Syracuse youth from Fowler and Nottingham high schools.

TIM ROLLINS was born in 1955 and raised in rural central Maine. He studied fine art at the University of Maine, and earned his BFA degree at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. After graduate studies in art education and philosophy at New York University, Rollins began teaching art for special education middle school students in a South Bronx public school. In 1984, with a team of his most dedicated students, Rollins founded the Art and Knowledge Workshop, an after school fine arts studio program in a local community center. The young artists in the collective named themselves K.O.S. for "Kids of Survival!" Soon their collaborative paintings inspired by classics of world literature and music won the attention and admiration of the immediate community and the art world at large.

In over twenty five years of work, Tim Rollins and K.O.S. have had over one hundred solo exhibitions worldwide. Their artwork is in the permanent collections of over eighty-five museums including The Museum of Modern Art in NY, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Tate Modern in London. In 1990, Rollins was awarded the prestigious Joseph Beuys Prize. In 1997, the film *Kids of Survival* won the Emmy Award for Best Cultural Documentary. Rollins was honored with a Distinguished Service Award from the National Art Educators' Association in 2004 and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Maine College of Art in 2006.

Many members of K.O.S. have gone on to advanced studies in fine art and education at major learning institutions including Stanford University in Stanford, CA; School of Visual Arts in New York City; University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA; Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, NY; Columbia University in New York City; Teachers' College in New York City; New York University in New York City; The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, PA; San Francisco College of Art and Design in San Francisco, CA; and SUNY Purchase in Purchase, NY. Current K.O.S. members include Angel Abreu, born Philadelphia, 1974; Nelson Savinon, born New York City, 1971; Jorge Abreu, born New York City, 1979; Robert Branch, born New York City, 1977; Emanuel Carvajal, born New York City, 1981; Daniel Castillo, born New York City, 1982; Ala Ektekar, born Berkeley, CA, 1978; Adam DeCroix, born Chicago, 1970; Benjamin Volta, born Abington, PA, 1979; Joshua Drayzen, born Huntington, NY, 1984; Wesley Martin Berg, born Minneapolis, MN, 1984.

Several works in the exhibition were created in a master class that Tim Rollins and Rick Savinon conducted with students from Nottingham and Fowler High Schools in Syracuse in February 2008. A list of the students in the class and photographs and video clips from that class can be seen on the web site of the Warehouse Gallery. The master class was made possible with support from a Chancellor's Initiative sponsored by Syracuse University Chancellor and President Nancy Cantor.

We thank Marion Wilson and Leonard Fonte who worked with the Partnership for Better Education and the College of Visual and Performing Arts at Syracuse University to organize the master class. We also thank Susan Centore, Jackie LeRoy, Pam Shippers, Tim Howard, Tina Sokolic, Areli Schemerhorn, and Jackie Schneider-Revette from Fowler High School and Liz Kupiec, Carrie Wolfanger, and Anne Daviau from Nottingham High School for their support.

KING AND COURAGE

TIM ROLLINS + K.O.S.

19 February, 2008 — 5 April, 2008

THE WAREHOUSE GALLERY ♦ SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

THE WAREHOUSE GALLERY

Syracuse University
350 West Fayette Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

The Warehouse Gallery is an international contemporary art venue of the SU Art Galleries at Syracuse University. The gallery's mission is to present exhibitions and programs by artists whose work engages the community in a dialogue regarding the role the arts can play in illuminating critical issues of our life and times.

GALLERY STAFF

Frank Olive—Designer/Preparator
Elaine M.S. Quick—Programs Coordinator
Sarah Lanigan—Graduate Assistant
Michael Austin—intern
Crystal McKenzie—work-study
Andrea Wangsanata—work-study
Jeffrey Hoone—Interim Curator

Web site—thewarehousegallery.org
Information—info@thewarehousegallery.org
Voice (315) 443-6450 Fax (315) 443-6494



KING
AND
COURAGE

TIM ROLLINS



K.O.S.

THE WAREHOUSE GALLERY

GUIDE #2

Art can't change the world, but art changes people, and people change the world.

In one form or another this concept has guided the work of Tim Rollins and K.O.S. for the past twenty-five years. Since the early 1980s they have engaged in a process of creative collaboration where change and chance are the rewards for embracing the connection between art, literature, religion, and politics. While teaching at Intermediate School #52 in the South Bronx in 1984 Rollins started an after school art and literacy program for students the school deemed unteachable. Bringing together diverse elements of his background and personal experience, from the structure of choir practices in the Baptist Church that he still participates in, to the free-thinking challenges to authority embodied in the artist collective Group Material that he co-founded, Rollins approached teaching as a process of drawing out ideas in an engaged yet disciplined approach.

Rollins refused to patronize his students and instead encouraged them to explore classical literature and connect the content to their own experience. During one exercise Rollins instructed his students to make spontaneous drawings while he read aloud from George Orwell's book *1984*. One of the students misunderstood the instruction and began to draw directly onto the pages of his copy of the book. This accident excited the rest of the class, opened up creative possibilities, and literally drew the students into the text with an enthusiasm that previously seemed impossible.

The students in the class soon named themselves K.O.S. for Kids of Survival to acknowledge the skills they had acquired. The link between literature and art has remained a constant for Rollins and K.O.S. as the group has changed and evolved over the years. Many members of K.O.S. have gone on to pursue studies in fine arts and education, while others including Nelson (Rick) Savinon continue to participate in the ongoing activities and creation of new work in their New York studio and at workshops and master classes around the world.

During the collaborative process of creating new work in master classes Rollins provides inspiration, structure, and enthusiasm. While listening to readings of selected literature or historic readings class participants are instructed to begin drawing instinctively. As members are challenged with questions like whether or not there is a color that represents humanity, their obvious and often cliché drawings move towards more abstract and mysterious forms. In one class this process produced the triangular form and blood red color that formed the piece *I See the Promised Land* representing the spiritual belief of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. that life is a great triangle with depth, breadth, and transcendent light.

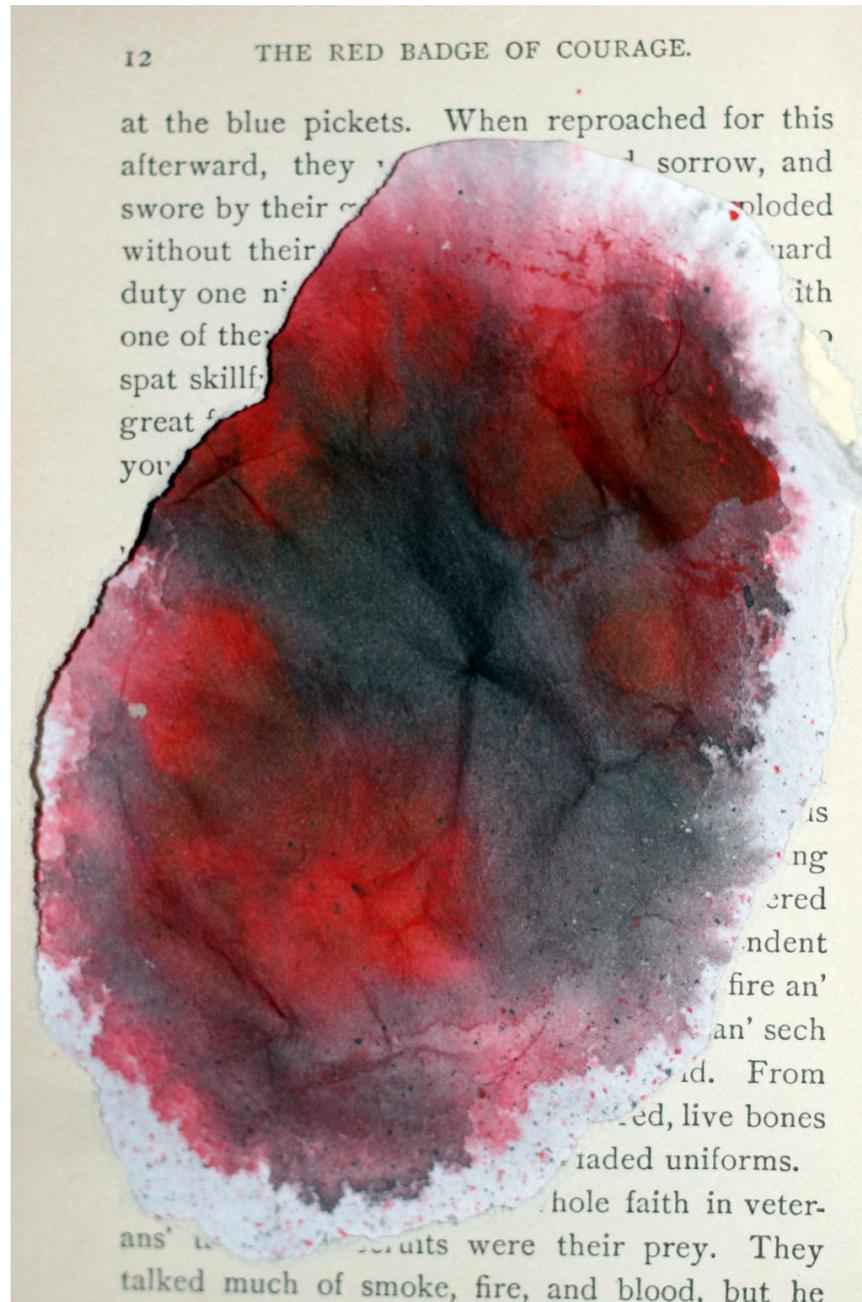
In another painting, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, the class started with a blank canvas approximately the size of Dr. King's cell in Birmingham where he wrote the letter that inspired the piece. Each student created their own original shade of black, and the colors were then painted in stripes representing the bars of the cell over a ground of book pages adhered to the canvas.

To produce *The Red Badge of Courage*, inspired by Stephen Crane's novel of the same name, students drew and painted directly on pages torn from a first edition copy of the novel. Representations of wounds were drawn on the pages symbolizing "the red sickness of battle" that Crane describes as the price of being able to look forward to peace. Struggle and redemption flow through the works inspired by Crane and King and help ground the unique collaborations of Rollins and K.O.S. with a respect for the past and greater promise for the future.

Several works in this exhibition were created in a master class that Rollins and Rick Savinon conducted with students from Nottingham and Fowler high schools in Syracuse. These works are included with previous works created by Rollins and K.O.S. based on the writings of King, Crane, and Ralph Ellison. To have students from Syracuse create work based on *The Red Badge of Courage* by Crane, who attended Syracuse University, brings an important community connection to the project and continues to extend the ability of Rollins and K.O.S. to find new meaning in voices rarely acknowledged as important.

This inherent subversive nature of the work of Tim Rollins and K.O.S. is also instructive not only for the students in the class but for the audience as we realize that a simple shift in our expectations is all we need to change what we once considered inevitable outcomes.

Jeffrey Hoone
Syracuse, New York
February 2008



Above: *The Red Badge Of Courage* (After Stephen Crane), 2008 . Watercolor, abaca paper, collage, vintage book page on rag paper 7 x 4.5"

Right: *I See The Promised Land* (After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), 2008. Digital video projection 17' X 11'

I See the Promised Land

This was Dr. King's last, and most apocalyptic, sermon. He delivered it, on the eve of his assassination, at [the Bishop Charles] Mason Temple in Memphis, Tennessee, on 3 April 1968. Mason Temple is the headquarters of the Church of God in Christ, the largest African American pentecostal denomination in the United States.

Thank you very kindly, my friends. As I listened to Ralph Abernathy in his eloquent and generous introduction and then thought about myself, I wondered who he was talking about. It's always good to have your closest friend and associate say something good about you. And Ralph is the best friend that I have in the world.

I'm delighted to see each of you here tonight in spite of a storm warning. You reveal that you are determined to go on anyhow. Something is happening in Memphis, something is happening in our world.

As you know, if I were standing at the beginning of time, with the possibility of general and panoramic view of the whole human history up to now, and the Almighty said to me, "Martin Luther King, which age would you like to live in?"—I would take my mental flight by Egypt through, or rather across the Red Sea, through the wilderness, on toward the promised land. And in spite of its magnificence, I wouldn't stop there. I would move on by Greece, and take my mind to Mount Olympus. And I would see Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Euripides and Aristophanes assembled around the Parthenon as they discussed the great and eternal issues of reality.

But I wouldn't stop there. I would go on, even to the great heyday of the Roman Empire. And I would see developments around there, through various emperors and leaders. But I wouldn't stop there. I would even come up to the day of the Renaissance, and get a quick picture of all that the Renaissance did for the cultural and esthetic life of man. But I wouldn't stop there. I would even go by the way that the man for whom I'm named had his habitat. And I would watch Martin Luther as he tacked his ninety-five theses on the door at the church in Wittenberg.

But I wouldn't stop there. I would come on up even to 1863, and watch a vacillating president by the name of Abraham Lincoln finally come to the conclusion that he had to sign the Emancipation Proclama-