

Students Question Students

Jim Roche: *Glory Roads*

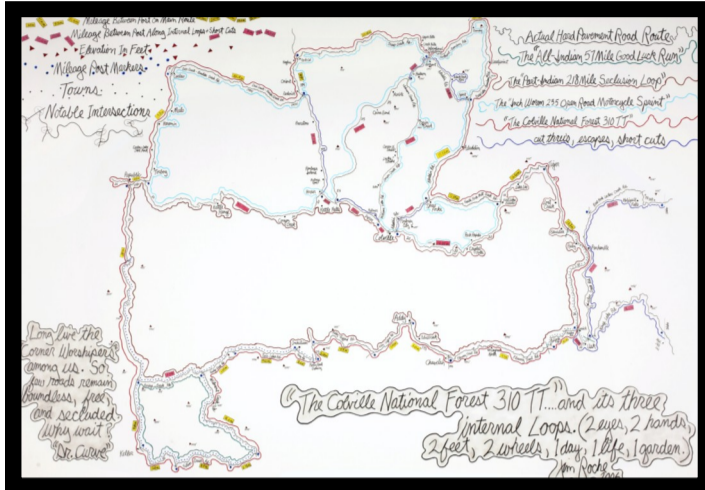
Thought provoking questions created by students for fellow students to critically analyze the artwork in the exhibition.

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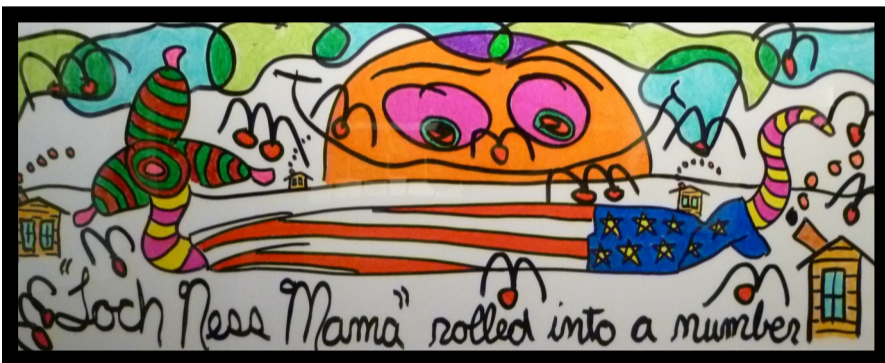
Edited by: Casey Chandler and Francis Gortaire



1. Jim Roche's interest in motorcycles is noteworthy. We see them in his art and in his history. Consider the motorcycle route maps in this exhibit. Obviously, they are on display in an art museum. Would you be surprised to see a map of the United States in an art museum? What about these motorcycle route maps—would you consider them art? Which aspects of these maps lead you to this conclusion? Think about route names and notes around the map.



Top Left: Artist with his motorcycle and artwork.
Immediate Left: Jim Roche, *The Colville National Forrest 310 TT*, 2006, graphite and color pencil on paper.

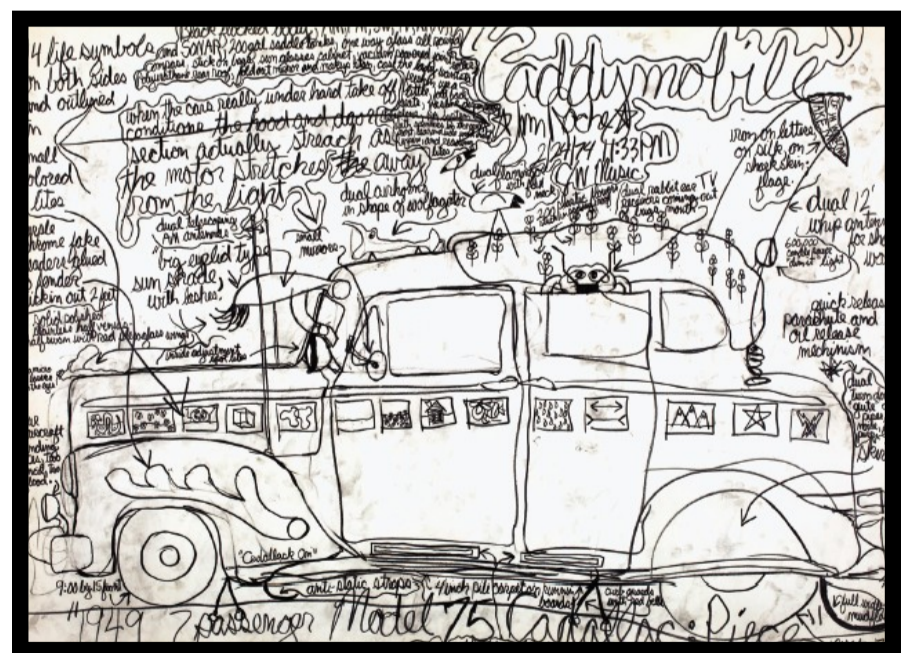


Above: Jim Roche, *Loch Ness Mama rolled into a number*, 1971, colored inks on polyester resin film.

3. Jim Roche's drawings are cartoon-like and graphic even though they have complex features. Jim Roche often likes using bright colors to grab the attention of the audience. Look for one of his images with the Loch Ness Mama character. What is the artist's objective in this drawing? Can you guess that this object is a Loch Ness Mama without reading the text? What do you think the Loch Ness Mama stands for and why is it always with a pigeon and sun? Do you see any similar characteristics to his other drawings? Is there a sense of humor to his work? If so, how does he convey it?

Right: Jim Roche, *Caddymobile*, 1974, graphite on paper.

2. Throughout Jim Roche's works we see the figure of Loch Ness Mama. His inspiration for this iconography came from his love for ceramics and sculpture. Many of his Loch Ness Mama drawings were proposals for his ceramic sculpture. The artist believes in acting on intuition, that each art piece an artist creates is a reflection of that artist. While looking at these Loch Ness Mama drawings do you see a relationship to a ceramic form? How might Roche's belief in "acting on intuition" influence his choice of drawing on paper prior to translating his images to ceramics or sculpture? Are these works finished as they are? Does Roche need to create them three-dimensionally?



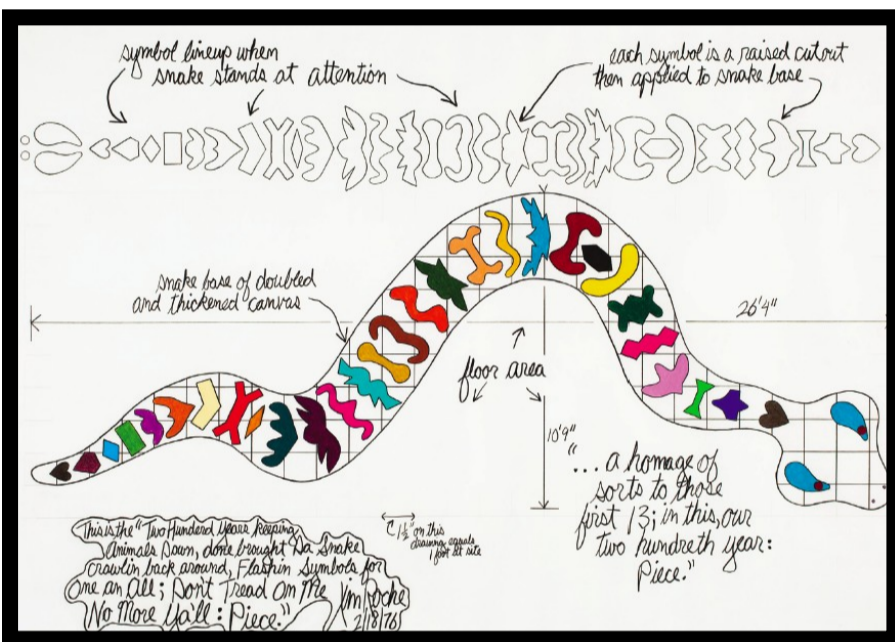
4. Jim Roche intended *Caddymobile* to be actually created. The drawing was Roche's way of working out the idea for the installation planned. What makes this drawing an artwork in its own right? Does the translation of creative thought through any means make the resulting product a piece of art? Stylistically, what is the correlation between Roche's writings and his use of line to create the image? Does the gesture of the line used to create the *Caddymobile* mimic Roche's writings, or vice versa?

5. *Don't Tread on Me No More Ya'll: Piece* was created during the bicentennial year for the United States and this piece alludes to the original thirteen colonies' Gadsden flag. *Don't Tread on Me No More Ya'll: Piece* was installed on the floor, which seems to be counterintuitive to the idea expressed by the Gadsden flag. Was this a conscious decision by Roche to make this contrast? The snake that appears on the Gadsden flag is positioned in a more aggressive coiled posture while Roche's is outstretched. Could this be a comment on the changing attitudes of the country?

6. The use of varied shape and color are predominant in *Don't Tread on Me No More Y'all: Piece*. Each shape that adorns the snake is slightly different, but fits together cohesively. Roche chose to use a wide range of colors in both the shapes and background of the snake. Once again these choices differ greatly from the original Gadsden flag. How does this reflect the transformation in America in its 200th year?



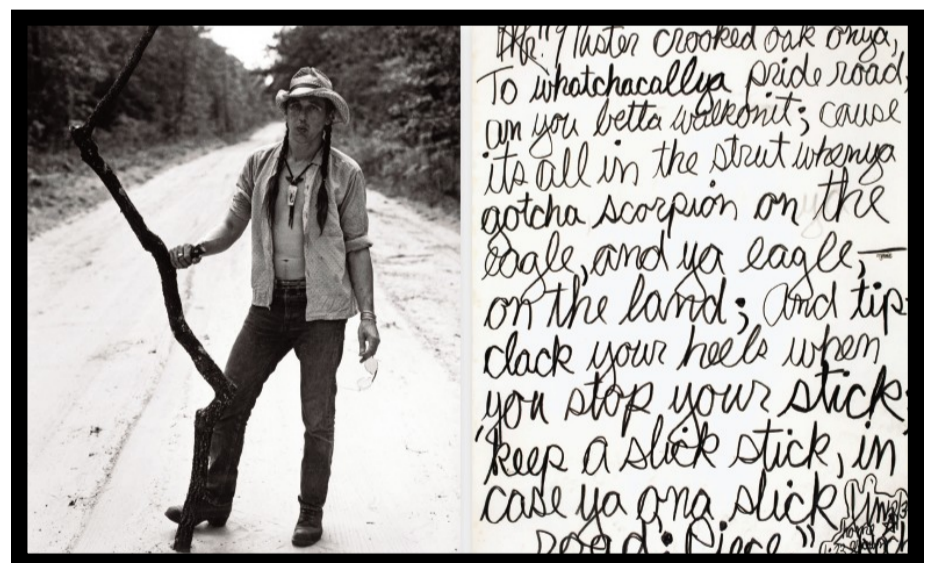
Gadsden Flag. Created during the United States fight for independence. Named after Colonel Christopher Gadsden.



Above: Jim Roche, *Don't Tread on Me No More Ya'll: Piece*, 1976, graphite and colored pencil on paper.

7. The image *Don't Tread on Me No More Ya'll* is only a proposal for an installation. Some may see this only as a rough draft of the final goal which was the large installation. However, now that this drawing is what remains, is it possible to look at it separately from the installation and as a piece of art in and of itself? If someone else were to follow these specifications and recreate the installation would that piece hold the same weight as the original installation? Is it the idea or the execution of the idea that is most important?

8. Jim Roche's titles are very interesting but sometimes he also includes long texts within his pieces. Look for one of these 2D works, preferably a photograph, which is accompanied by hand written text from the artist. Read the text and observe the piece. Think about the way the text relates to the 2D work. How does the southern dialect of the text give you more understanding about the work and its message? Would you get the same understanding of the work without the text? What do you get from the image and what do you get from the text? Is the text a part of the piece or is it like another information label? Is the work as a whole a photograph, a drawing, or both? Finally, think about what this work as whole tells you about the artist and his art.



Above: Jim Roche, *Mister crooked oak...*, 1974, photo drawing.

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 Museum of Fine Arts
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