

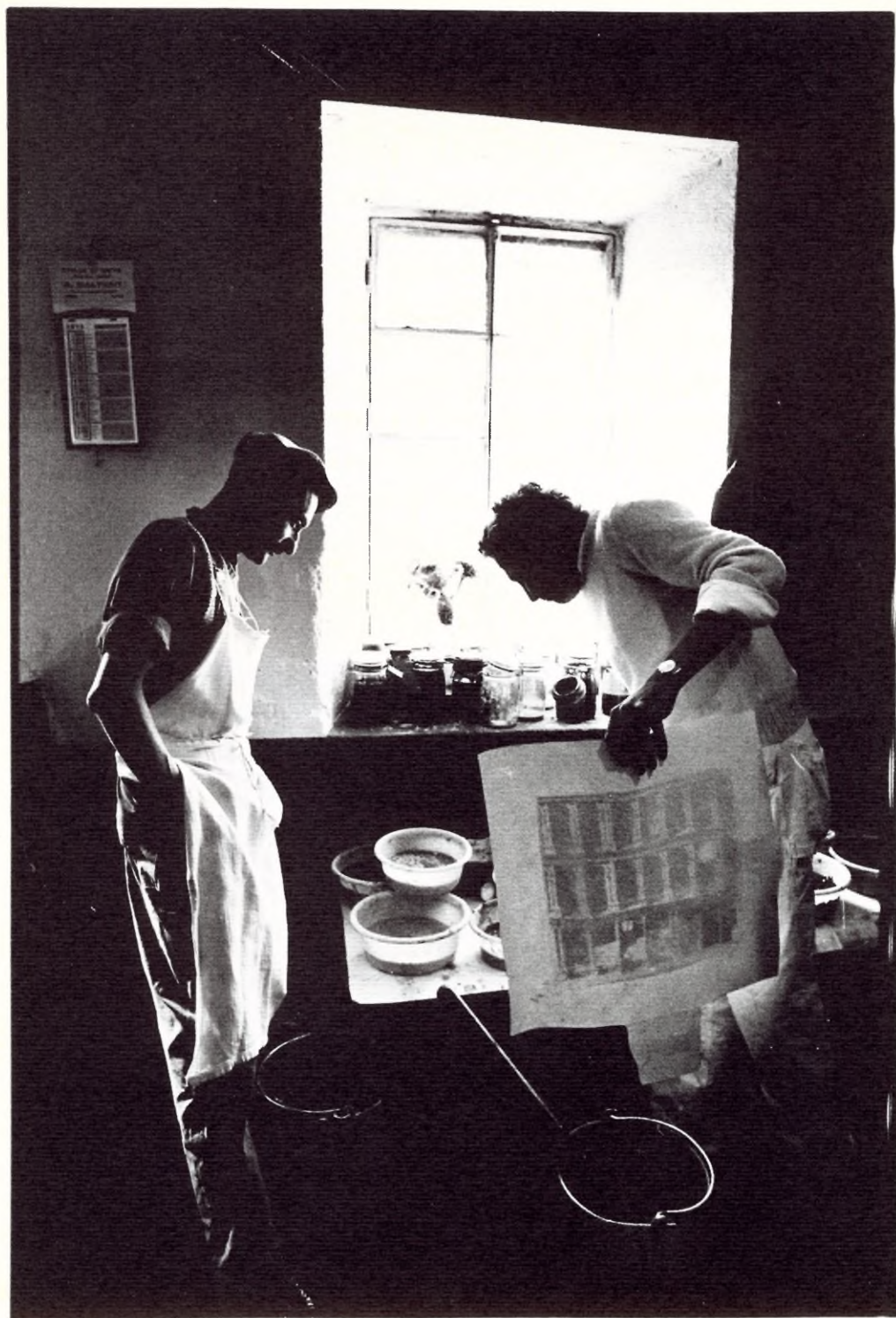
PROCES AND PASSES

*Pages & Fuses were made at the Richard de Bas Mill
in Ambert, Puy de Dome, France in collaboration with
master papermaker, Marius Peraudeau.*

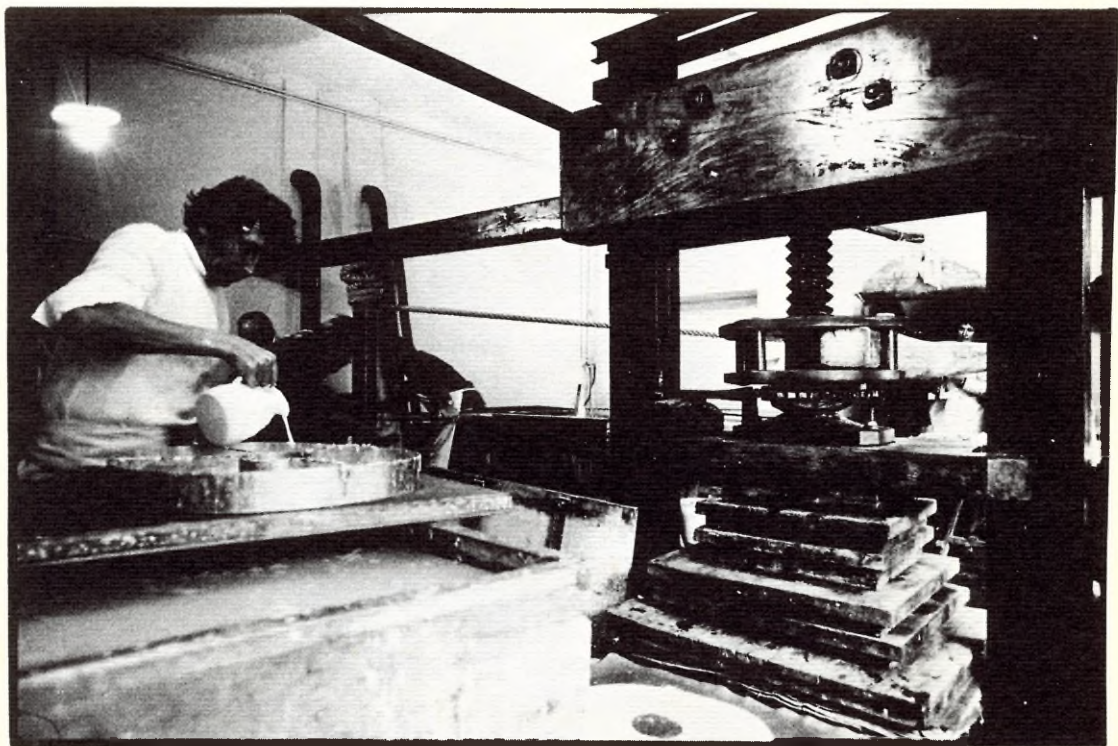
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The Moulin à Papier Richard de Bas in Ambert, France has been in existence since the 14th century. The belief is that this mill had been in operation and owned by the same family for hundreds of years, making fine handmade papers bearing the mill's heart-shaped watermark. Today they can be found in books in great historical libraries throughout the world. One part of the mill is a museum where centuries-old paper is exhibited, and there is a display of the papermaking process as it was in the 14th century. Many of the same techniques and equipment have not changed and are still in use at the mill today. At the close of World War II, the mill was purchased by master papermaker Marius Peraudeau. It was M. Peraudeau's collaboration with Robert Rauschenberg and Gemini that resulted in this project, *PAGES & FUSES*.

For some time Rauschenberg had had an interest in papermaking. Ken Tyler felt that a project could develop combining both the processes of papermaking and printmaking. Tyler discussed the idea with Vera Freeman, import manager of the Andrews / Nelson / Whitehead paper company of New York who suggested the Richard de Bas mill for such a project because they produced handmade papers of very high quality and were suitably sophisticated to handle the venture. Elie d'Humières, president of the export division of the French maker of fine papers, Arjomari-Prioux, was contacted in Paris. His response was very enthusiastic; he in turn brought the proposal to Marius Peraudeau who agreed to the idea. The rôle of liaison, performed by both Vera Freeman and Elie d'Humières in preparation for and up to the completion of the project was invaluable to its success, with Mrs. Freeman continuing to send Gemini up-to-the-minute reports on the work through its progress and supplying us with information on the history of the mill.



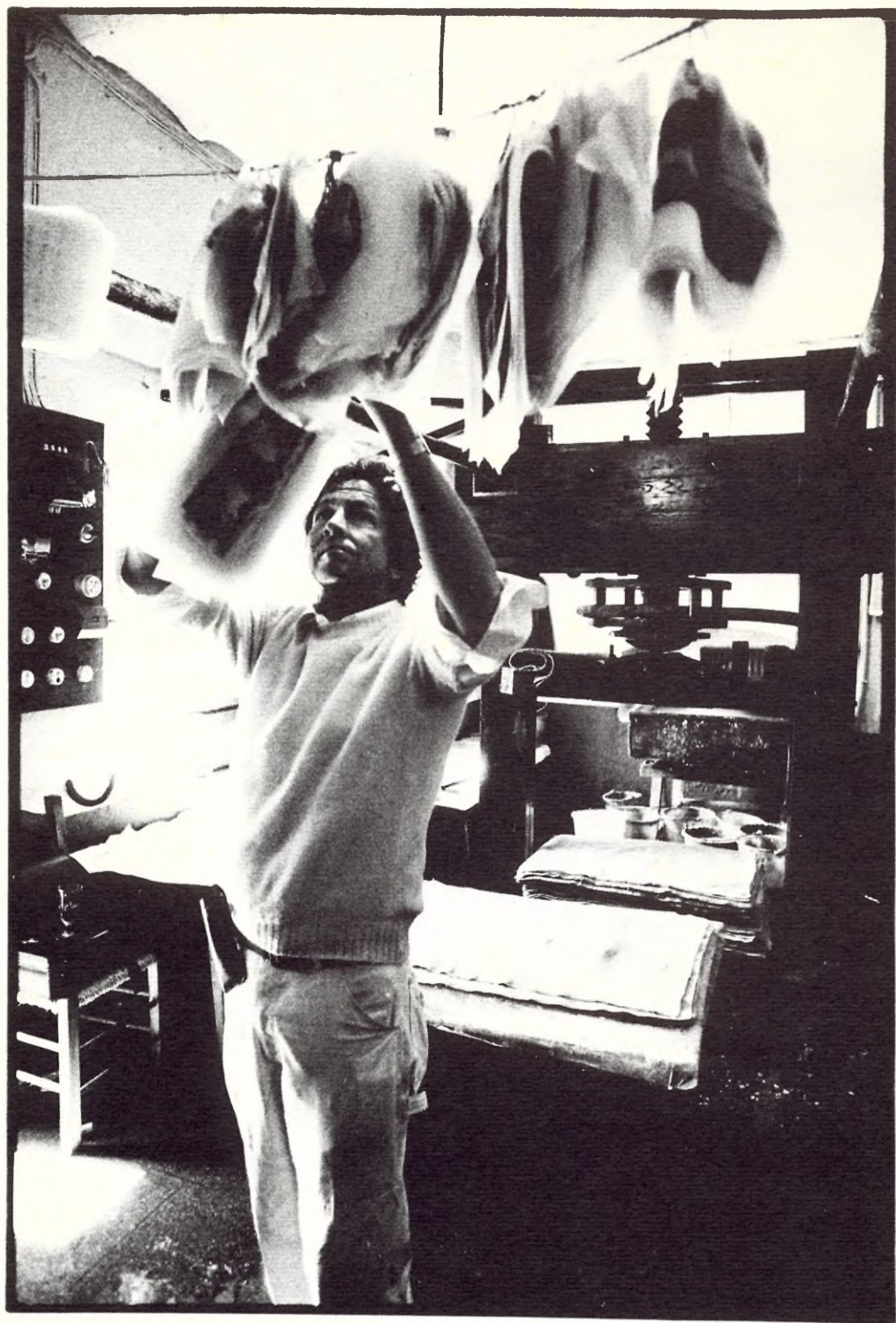
The project took place in August 1973 and lasted four days. Rauschenberg became completely immersed in the papermaking process. A tinsmith formed the molds to the artist's specifications. Rauschenberg determined the shapes by pouring the pulp into these molds, or by pouring them freely as in *PAGE 1*. He added foreign elements such as rags, cord and twine. In advance, sheets of Japanese tissue had been screen printed at Gemini with magazine images selected by the artist. At the mill, as the paper was being made, these tissues were laminated into the wet sheets of paper. Colors were obtained for the paper by using light-fast pigments made especially for papermaking. When eleven standards had been decided upon by the artist, the editions were begun. Great care was taken to follow his standards, even though it was his wish that some amount of variation occur.

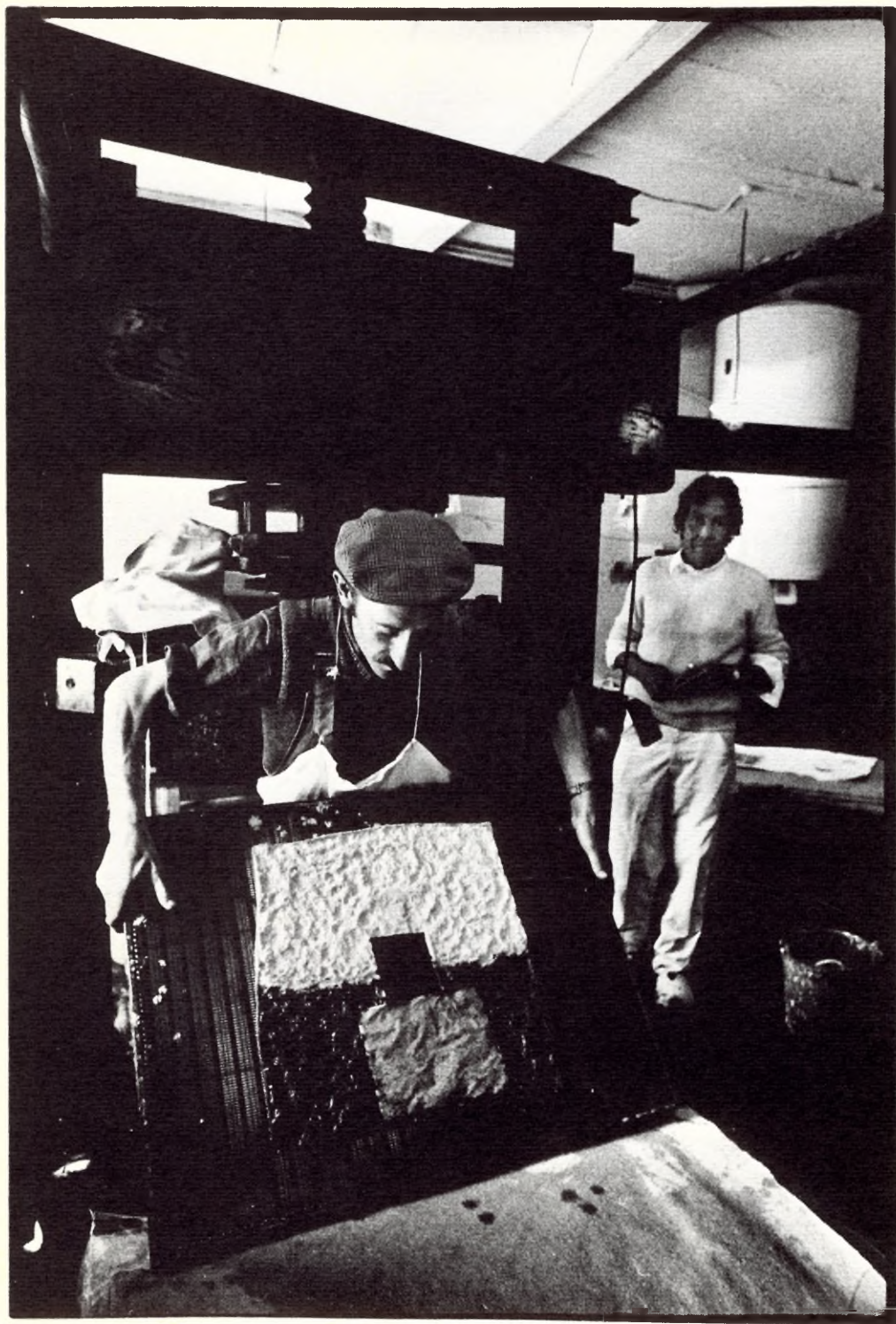


That is why, when examining each edition carefully, it can be noted that differences in color or form exist. A singular variance in imagery was developed to create a State edition of *VALE*. The variance occurs in a portion of each piece which was achieved by transferring an image from a printed tissue onto a wet sheet leaving only the imprint from the tissue.

Months later, after all the editions had been completed, the workers of the company, wearing heavy wooden shoes, turned the molds inside out and trampled them, making them unusable and impossible to be put back into shape or to recreate others using these as models. A notarized certificate to this effect has been filed with the Registry of Ambert dated January 26, 1974.







It was the artist's decision that in order to remain in keeping with the inherent quality of *PAGES*, his signature be embossed, rather than signed in pencil, and that it was the placement of the signature at the moment of signing only which determined that that indeed was the front. The chop and the print and identification numbers appear on the reverse. The *FUSES* are signed and numbered by the artist in pencil on the reverse of each work.



Since the artist's wish is that *PAGES* & *FUSES* be viewed from both sides, a drawer was devised with a removable base making it possible for it to stand upright on a table or hang on a wall. With the exception of *PAGE I*, which rests on inner mounts, each piece simply rests within the drawer which slides open allowing it to be removed easily and held.





PAGES & FUSES not reproduced

Pages

- PAGE 2 RR73-633 22 in. diameter Edition: 11
PAGE 3 RR73-634 18½ x 19 in. Edition: 35
PAGE 4 RR73-631 Vertical format: each sheet 15 x 20 in.
with 4 in. interval; with twine, overall
dimensions 83 x 20 in., variable. Edition: 19
PAGE 5 RR73-630 Vertical format: each sheet
21 x 27 in. with 6 in. interval; with cord,
overall dimensions 48 x 29 in.,
variable. Edition: 23

FUSES

- ROAN RR73-635 20 x 25 in. Edition: 36
HIND RR73-637 26 x 20 in. Edition: 34
SCOW RR73-638 20 x 25 in. Edition: 34
BIT RR73-639 18½ x 17½ in. Edition: 33
VALE RR73-640 19½ x 24¾ in. Edition: 14
VALE (state) RR73-640A 19½ x 24¾ in. Edition: 15

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