

Bob Rust's "Paint to Forget Series"

by

Carlo Schefter & Joseph MacKinnon

for

IDIOT BOX

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INT. SOUND STAGE - BOB RUST SHOW

Sign for Bob Rust Show.

Dissonant elevator musik.

BOB RUST, a disheveled Vietnam veteran wearing loose-fitting fatigues, stands next to a canvas on a black sound stage. Bob has a large orange afro, scarring on his neck, a hook for an arm, and a palette on his hook.

Bob stares despondently at the canvas, which already has base-paints applied.

Startled, he turns to the camera.

BOB RUST

Oh, yeah. Hey, yeah. Didn't see you there. I'm, uh, Sgt. Bob Rust, and I'd like to welcome you the 29th episode of our 'Paint to Forget Series'. If this is your first time with us I'd like to remind you we're using our Rolling Thunder paint kit, available at your local VA.

INSERT: The Rolling Thunder Paint Kit. A box beside a pedestal. Some paints. Some brushes.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)

Today we're going to paint a scene called "A Pleasant Meadow."

Bob Rust looks at his palette and starts mixing paints.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)

We're going to start our meadow with some happy little trees... happy little palm trees.

CLOSE UP: Bob paints some palm trees. There is enough detail to recognize that he painting a jungle.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)

Charlie's in the trees. Take your Asiatic yellow ... you can see their clever little eyes peeking out from the fronds.

Bob paints the Vietcong soldiers' eyes with a trembling hand. Bob recoils slightly from the canvas. He visibly overcomes internal discomfort and resumes painting the tree-line.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)  
 They don't look too nice, but  
 that's just because we're not  
 friends yet. We need to whip up  
 some birds for air-support.

BOB RUST (V.O.)  
 Take some of your Huey Hog Green  
 and paint a chassis.

CLOSE UP: Bob takes a tube of green paint out of a  
 bandolier under his jacket and squeezes some out.

INSERT: Green paint on Bob's palette.

CLOSE UP: Bob applies the green paint to the canvas and  
 paints combat helicopters in the sky over the treetops.

BOB RUST (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 These birds, they're not so happy.  
 They need to express themselves.

Bob paints details on the combat helicopters.

BOB RUST  
 It's important to express  
 ourselves. Always remember ...

Bob becomes extremely sullen and serious. He paints more  
 aggressively.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)  
 That painting with lead is a great  
 way to do that!

Partially off-camera, Bob's producer LARRY KAINMEIER, tries  
 to get Bob's attention.

LARRY KAINMEIER (O.S.)  
 Bob ... you okay? Keepin' calm,  
 Bob. Keep it cool.

Bob regains his composure and takes a deep breath.

BOB RUST  
 Uh ... with lead paints ...

Bob mixes some more paint.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)  
 Doesn't our meadow seem a little  
 bit lonely? Let's fill it with  
 some friends.

Bob paints a little town with a bunch of people in the foreground.

BOB RUST (V.O.)  
Some townspeople in their little huts.

CLOSE-UP: Bob paints a gun into last townspeople's hand.

BOB RUST  
Uh oh. See what we did there? *He* made a mistake. Some mistakes you can't take back. Some things *you* can't unsee. You just have to keep going.

BOB RUST (V.O.)  
If you've painted with me before you know that a good color for fixing mistakes is our Agent Orange.

INSERT: Agent Orange in a paint tube on display.

CLOSE UP: Bob prepares some Agent Orange paint on his tablet.

BOB RUST  
Just apply some to your *type 2* fan brush and rain some fire onto those huts. *Correct your mistakes.*

CLOSE UP: Bob paints a horrific Vietnamese massacre.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)  
Now let's add a couple highlights. Tungsten White is great for that.

BOB RUST (V.O.)  
Little happy muzzle flashes, just flashin' away.

CLOSE UP: Bob makes the massacre even more horrific by painting soldiers gunning down townspeople; mutilated bodies; and muzzle flashes.

Bob smiles dispassionately as he leans in to manage the fine details on his painting.

BOB RUST (WHISPERED)  
Flash, flash.

Offscreen, we hear distant gunfire.

Bob's smile widens. He has a faraway look in his eyes. He nods slowly. He catches himself and returns to paint.

BOB RUST

Our foreground seems a little sparse. Maybe we should put some sleeping people there. We need a charcoal color ... Let's see.

CLOSE UP: Bob mixes all of the colors together.

BOB RUST (V.O.)

Oh Heroin Brown, I almost forgot.

CLOSE UP: Bob paints corpses, vultures, and chaos.

BOB RUST

There we go, resting. Just lyin' there, no thoughts, no worries, not a care in the world. I wish I was dead.

Bob begins to hallucinate. His hallucinations are superimposed onto his sweating face and the sound stage.

[Use stock footage from the Vietnam War, particularly the Tet Offensive, for the hallucinations.]

Bob seems disoriented. He looks straight into the camera and around. He hears only jungle sounds.

Bob shakes his head and looks back at the canvas.

BOB RUST (CONT'D)

Oh look. A vulture. He's come for some lunch. Aren't you feeling hungry? *I'm not*. He's going snack on this scene.

LARRY KAINMEIER (O.S.)

Bob, wrap it up. C'mon buddy.  
Psssst. BOB!

Bob smiles again and resumes his earlier levity.

BOB RUST

There's our pleasant meadow. Really hope you've enjoyed painting with us today. Don't forget ... It's important to forget. Next time we'll be painting a Hanoi marketplace, a place where I got my first brush...with death...

CHANNEL CHANGES ABRUPTLY.