

[Prince artist website](#)

[Prince at Gagosian Gallery](#)

## Artist Resources – Richard Prince (American, b. 1949)

In addition to his visual practice, Prince is a prolific writer, producing [stream-of-consciousness narratives](#) and [abstract poetic commentaries](#) on life and art.

In 1993, Prince embarked on site-specific installation with [Regen Projects in LA](#) – a West Hollywood bungalow transformed into a living work of art. “It’s not a gallery and it’s not a museum...it’s my space, it’s my house, it’s about a series of rooms so I can separate certain types of visual information,” Prince explained in [a documentary about the creation of the space](#). “I get to do what in three-dimension what I can do in a book, what I can do in all my photographs.”

[Bomb Magazine](#) spoke with Prince in 1988 about photographic truth, the appeal of advertising images, text and image as art objects, and his relationship with viewers. “You obviously want some people to look at it, you know you’re not doing it for a bunch of trees in the forest...[but] you spend so much time alone, you do art in private for the private,” Prince reflected. “With larger audiences comes interference. The art world has always been a private world. The minute you have an audience, you start censoring yourself unconsciously or consciously.”

[The Guggenheim](#) organized the most comprehensive survey of Prince’s career to date in 2007, bringing together critical examples of his photography, painting, sculpture, and works on paper to illustrate the significance of his innovations in contemporary art since the 1970s.

[Vice](#) joined Prince at his home and studio in 2008 to discuss the artist’s popularity and reputation, current work, and his drive toward the appropriation for which he is celebrated. “For me, a lot of what I think about, you could talk about in terms of this idea of continuation. All it is is something that’s added on to what has been done before me...[It’s] something that you have to give yourself permission to do, someone else can’t do it for you.”



Prince, 1982  
Photograph: Peter Bellamy



Prince in studio, 2018

Photograph: Bill Power

Prince’s 2014 exhibition at Almine Rech, [New Figures](#), debuted a new series of found photograph cut-out collage drawings evoking the expressive lines of Matisse and surrealist juxtapositions of Picasso, in Prince’s trademark style of cultural commentary.

[Gagosian](#) showcased Prince’s new series of [Instagram portraits](#) in 2020, a follow up to his [first foray into the theme in 2014](#). “I wasn’t sure it even looked like art,” Prince [commented about his process](#). “And that was the best part. Not looking like art. The new portraits were in that gray area. Undefined. In-between. They had no history, no past, no name. A life of their own.”

Prince returned to the Guggenheim in 2020 to participate in the museum’s [first artist-curated exhibition](#), in which Prince joined fellow contemporary artists Cai Guo-Qiang, Paul Chan, Jenny Holzer, Julie Mehretu, and Carrie Mae Weems in selecting objects from the permanent collection for an intimate multi-generational and perspectival display. Prince [spoke at the Guggenheim](#) about his first retrospective and the new exhibition, his early work in advertising, the notions of chance, and serialization. “I’ve always thought about subject matter first, and the medium second, how to interpret the subject matter,” Prince reflected. “I like when the art has nothing to do with art, when it has to do with finding something in common with another person.”



Richard Prince (American, b. 1949)

**Untitled (Cowboy)**, 1989

Ektacolor print

Private Collection; L2024:23.1

Richard Prince rose to prominence in the Pictures Generation of the late 1970s and 1980s with photo-based artworks that appropriated images from advertisements, magazines, and pop culture. His slippery navigation of copyright and intellectual property challenged art's relationships to issues of originality and aesthetic authenticity and often embroiled him in legal and critical controversies. **Untitled (Cowboy)** is part of Prince's infamous series of cowboys taken from the "Marlboro Man" cigarette advertisements of the 1970s and offers an excellent example of his early work and the issues it engaged. When working in the tear-sheets department of *Time*, Prince began collecting, re-photographing, and re-contextualizing these images as stark contrasts to the Vietnam War, race riots, and assassinations featured elsewhere in the magazine.

*On view April 10 – July 14, 2024*



Richard Prince (American, b. 1949)

**Untitled (three women looking in the same direction)**, 1980

Three Ektacolor photographs, Ed. 3/10

Private Collection; L2023:82.1

“These were actual photographs, literal rather than figurative. I simply attached the literal, the actual, to what was in fact a set-up, a version of a scene or something that was close to a movie still. I came along and made a real photograph out of what was essentially an image in a magazine.” – Richard Prince, 1982

Richard Prince is known for his appropriation artwork, which he began in the late 1970s with other artists in the Pictures Generation, such as Cindy Sherman, Gretchen Bender, and Robert Longo. His use of advertisements, magazines, and pop culture imagery is often controversial for its slippery relationship with copyright and related questions of originality and intellectual property. **Untitled (three women looking in the same direction)** is comprised of three different images Prince re-photographed from other publications and unified with cropping, color matching, and gesture. The triptych points to the superficiality of mass-media, which deploys stereotypical images to establish and enforce notions of beauty and class privilege.

*On view September 6 – December 10, 2023*

Richard Prince (American, b. 1949)

**Untitled (White Noise)**, c. 2018-2019

Collage, oilstick, acrylic, gel medium, vinyl stickers, and charcoal on canvas

Private Collection; L2022:117.1

*On view February 16 – May 21, 2023*





Richard Prince (American, b. 1949)

**Untitled (Cowboys)**, 1992

Ektacolor print, edition 2/2

Private Collection; L2022:86.1

*On view August 10 – November 13, 2022*

Richard Prince (American, b. 1949)

**Untitled**, 2018-2019

Collage, oil stick, acrylic, charcoal, gel medium, and ink jet on canvas

Private Collection; L2021:157.1

Painter and photographer Richard Prince is best known for his controversial appropriation art from the Pictures Generation of the 1970s and 1980s. His recent work, however, is more subtle and takes a turn toward the Neo-Expressionist style of the earlier era. **Untitled** is part of Prince's *High Times* series. Instead of appropriating another artist's work, Prince appropriates his own. The series takes imagery from the artist's *Hippie Drawings* series (1997-2000) and earlier "dead heads" (mid-1970s) that were previously only displayed in catalogues and artist books. Named for Prince's work with *High Times* magazine, the series is a rabbit hole of references that spans the artist's career. Prince reflects: "I'm not sure I'm even pretending. It was time... circle back to the 'dead' heads and do something that I was born to do."

*On view February 2 – May 8, 2022*





Richard Prince (American, b. 1949)

**Untitled**, 2017

Collage, oil stick, acrylic, charcoal, gel medium, and ink jet on canvas

Private Collection; L2020:87.1

Since the 1970s, Richard Prince has used photography and painting to explore the divide between “high” and “low” art, the concepts of reproduction and originality, and the ways media participates in the construction of culture. In **Untitled**, from the series *High Times*, begun in 2017, Prince turns the lens on himself and how his own art has been appropriated by expanding on his *Hippie Drawings* from the late 1990s. The loosely defined collage of figures and expressive use of color that define both the earlier drawings and recent series were inspired by the spontaneous authenticity of his children’s artwork and curiosity of how “a hippie would draw.”

In 2016, Prince’s hippie drawings became part of the cultural zeitgeist, reproduced on five special edition covers of *High Times* magazine and in the album cover art for *We Got it from Here...Thank You 4 Your Service*, by the hip-hop group A Tribe Called Quest. Prince himself returned to the drawings in 2017 through the flexible medium of inkjet printing. The process of photographing, editing, adding-to, and re-photographing his own work exemplifies his creative mastery of copy and reproduction. As he reflected after beginning the *High Times* series, “It was time to go back, remind...and do something I was born to do.”

*On view October 7, 2020 – January 10, 2021*