

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Stocchi, Francesco, "Richard Prince", Artforum, March 2009, pp.255-256

PARIS

Richard Prince

PATRICK SEGUIN

I put Nabokov's *Lolita* and Kubrick's *Lolita* next to each other. The book is Monarch Select paperback, MS27. No image on the cover. All graphics. Just the name 'Lolita' in red, stenciled in longhand against two background bands of yellow and white. The movie is an MGM/CBS Home Video. It's in a thin cardboard slipcase. On the cover is a pastel illustration of Sue Lyon as Lolita. She has orange, heart-shaped sunglasses on. There's a lollipop in her mouth. "Black comedy," "Tragic farce," "Comic despair" are italicized to the bottom left of her head. On the back, small black-and-white stills of Quilty and Humbert Humbert. The box reminds me that Nabokov screenplayed his own book.

This excerpt from *Bringing It All Back Home*, written by Richard Prince in 1988, demonstrates the artist's famously obsessive approach to collecting—perhaps the only approach for a true collector. This unusual show opens up a new type of appropriation for Prince—self-appropriation—where artist and collector merge in a retrospective context, forward looking and receptive to new developments. If what the artist collects often ends up in his work, here it is the idea of the collection itself, to be enjoyed as such, that is employed in an original way.

Thirteen pieces of furniture—desks, sofas, beds, and bookcases—containing the material of Prince's universe were presented at Galerie Patrick Seguin, which specializes in twentieth-century furniture and architecture. These are objects that are also containers of art, in keeping with the artist's privileging of continuation over dichotomies such as new/old or original/unoriginal. If his contribution to the 2007 Frieze Art Fair, *Untitled (Original)*, was an homage to his 1969 Dodge Charger, which he drives every day, here he presented an homage to his own practice and to the possibilities that his acquisitive approach to art offers. (His project *Second House*, 2001–2004, acquired by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 2005, and the recent exhibition at London's Serpentine Gallery of his own collection of prototypes were already moving in this direction.) But here Prince presented a new exhibition category. It didn't matter whether or not these pieces were seen as works of art; what mattered was the overall concept, a layered image where each object exists in and of itself, didactically, functionally, and indissolubly. As with his "rephotographs," the boundaries of reality are obfuscated. The central work, *Nurse Hat Chair* (all works 2008), is the only chair in the show and the only work entirely designed by the artist as a piece of furniture, devised specifically for its mid-twentieth-century modern aesthetic.

Richard Prince,
*Furniture with
Double-Sided Frame*,
2008, mixed media,
66 x 54 x 24".



Reproducing a nurse's headgear, the artist parodies himself and his Pop-Conceptual tradition. Arranged around the chair were his *Lolita* collection and nurse novels as well as joke paintings and "Gang" series photographs. In other words, Prince's most famous works were merged with his collection, presented as part of the furniture, in order to create a third vision—a sampling remix with few precedents. Prince seems to be proposing a new medium, bringing his tactics of juxtaposition and appropriation to the next level.

—Francesco Stocchi

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.