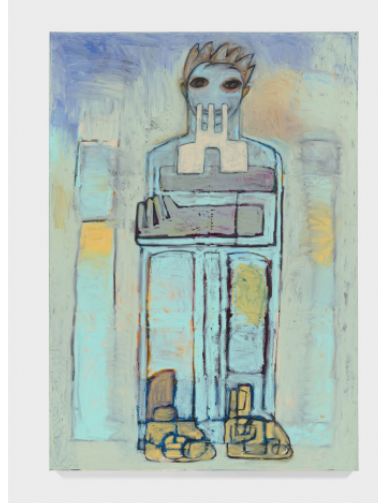


Richard Prince's Freak Flag Flies at Nahmad Contemporary

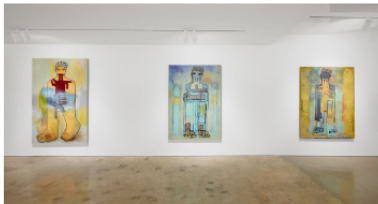
2 NOVEMBER 2023



Richard Prince, *Untitled* (2020). Acrylic, oil stick, and collage on canvas. 191.1 x 161.9 cm. © Richard Prince Studio. Courtesy Nahmad Contemporary, New York. Photo: Tom Powell.



Richard Prince, *Untitled* (2020). Acrylic and oil stick on canvas. 203.2 x 142.2 cm. © Richard Prince Studio. Courtesy Nahmad Contemporary, New York. Photo: Tom Powell.



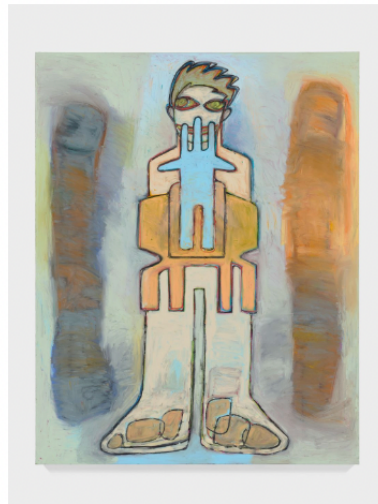
Exhibition view: Richard Prince, *FREAKS*, Nahmad Contemporary, New York (1 November–23 December 2023). Courtesy the artist and Nahmad Contemporary, New York. Photo: Tom Powell.



Exhibition view: Richard Prince, *FREAKS*, Nahmad Contemporary, New York (1 November–23 December 2023). Courtesy the artist and Nahmad Contemporary, New York. Photo: Tom Powell.



Richard Prince, *Untitled* (2020). Oil, acrylic, and oil stick on canvas. 203.2 x 149.9 cm. © Richard Prince Studio. Courtesy Nahmad Contemporary, New York. Photo: Tom Powell.



Richard Prince, *Untitled* (2020). Oil, acrylic, and oil stick on canvas. 190.2 x 149.9 cm. © Richard Prince Studio. Courtesy Nahmad Contemporary, New York. Photo: Tom Powell.

Guided by his fascination with misfits and subcultures, Richard Prince first sketched what he called his 'dead' heads with a ballpoint pen in 1972. 'They were probably the first things I did that ever had any soul,' he said.

In the American artist's latest exhibition, *FREAKS* (1 November–23 December 2023) at Nahmad Contemporary in New York, Prince showcases a series of characters which emerged from his series of Hippie Drawings featuring his 'dead' heads.

Previously portrayed in great cohorts saturated in zesty hues, Prince's figures now appear in individual portraits alongside abstract shapes with subtle facial outlines—perhaps resembling the ghosts of their disbanded group. No longer part of a hippie community, these characters have transformed into outcasts, or 'freaks'.

Prince's figures are characterised by their broad physical build, half-hidden smiles, and glassy eyes, at once quirky, vulnerable, and beautiful. Peculiar grates cover their mouths and chests, creating a barrier between subject and viewer.

Their pastel palette of muted yellow, pale blue, and purple across both figure and background brings a softness to the works, while their hazy, abstract surroundings create a dreamlike atmosphere around these outsiders.

Although anonymous, Prince's characters strike a chord with those who have, at some point, felt like they don't quite belong. They invite us to engage in dialogues about notions of identity and individuality within both the art world and society. Embracing their otherness, Prince's figures proudly let their freak flag fly.