

RICHARD PRINCE

JUST

MY

LUCK.

RICHARD PRINCE *Just My Luck*

In the artist's latest series, *Just My Luck* (2021), Richard Prince (b. 1949) continues his renowned engagement with classic American comedy to redefine notions of artistic originality and authorship.

Throughout his career, Prince has employed appropriation to probe American pop culture and social conventions. He first incorporated jokes into his work in the 1980s by inscribing well-known punch lines of celebrated comedians or popular cartoons onto paper. Shortly thereafter, the artist transitioned from drawing to painting by silk-screening the jokes onto canvases.

In the *Just My Luck* series, Prince delivers comic relief for the frivolous misfortunes of everyday life by appropriating legendary stand-up comedian Rodney Dangerfield's deadpan joke: "Just my luck. I was at the airport when my ship came in." Unlike his earlier painted jokes, in which the punch line was typed and silk-screened onto a primed surface, the artist's hand is notably present in these works. Here, the joke is expressed as hand-written charcoal inscriptions on large, raw canvas. While the same joke is repeated in each work, the nuances inherent to each hand-written text varies, suggesting the presence of the artist's signature. Yet, the series' minimalistic uniformity obscures the impression of originality and serves as a reminder of the recycled material at its core.

Building on Prince's legacy of appropriative strategies, the paintings comprising *Just My Luck* simultaneously subvert authorship and reveal the artist's presence. The linguistic component is not only self-referential, but also a nod to other text-imbued art, from Roy Lichtenstein's captioned comics and Cy Twombly's poetic inscriptions to Ed Ruscha's emblazoned words and Christopher Wool's stenciled puns.

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Just My Luck

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I W A S A T T H E
A I R P O T W H E N
M Y S H I P
C A M E I N .

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Works:

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Just My Luck, 2021

Charcoal on raw canvas

71 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 66 inches (182.6 × 167.6 cm)

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Just My Luck, 2021

Charcoal on raw canvas

66 × 66 inches (167.6 × 167.6 cm)

Published on the occasion of the exhibition

RICHARD PRINCE *Just My Luck*

at Gstaad Airport

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Richard Prince artworks © Richard Prince

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