

**RICHARD PRINCE**  
**Paintings 1988-1998****8 April - 22 May 1999**

Richard Prince is one of America's most influential contemporary artists. His appropriation of American white-trash culture includes his 'girlfriends' series taken from cult biker magazines, Marlboro cowboy advertisements, pop pin-ups and joke comics. What interests Prince is how the original readings of this source material have been transformed, exaggerated or in some cases divorced from their specific meaning through their adoption as a collective signifier in mass culture.

Prince has been making joke paintings since 1985 and the works in this exhibition range from 1988 to the present. The stale jokes, '*I put an ad in a swingers magazine and my parents answered it*', effortlessly co-opt the viewer into their subversive melancholy. Together with the joke paintings, we are showing a new series of appropriated 8x10 publicity photographs, of stars such as Pamela Anderson, Kurt Cobain and Robert de Niro. These are autographed to the artist by his own hand, a sort of shortcut to familiarity that emphasizes the redundant originality of the star's signature in a culture where an intimacy with our cultural icons is imagined.

A major retrospective of Richard Prince's work was curated by the Whitney Museum, New York, in 1992 and toured to San Francisco, Rotterdam and Kiel. He lives and works in Albany, New York.