



EDWARD CELLA ART & ARCHITECTURE

Richard Prince: The Douglas Blair Turnbaugh Collection (1977-1988)

New York writer and producer Douglas Blair Turnbaugh's private archive of artworks, ephemera, and personal correspondence collected during his unique relationship with artist Richard Prince features over 300 items, most of which have never before been seen or exhibited. The collection documents Prince's earliest and most formative years (1977-1988) and offers an intimate glimpse into the confidential rapport shared by this influential artist and his devoted early patron. Rich in ephemera, the collection includes notable and early original exhibition announcement cards, sequences of rare artist pamphlets and publications in addition to the photographs, drawings and text-based artworks acquired by or given to Turnbaugh as gifts. Perhaps most remarkable are the personal, illustrated letters from Prince to Turnbaugh that are filled with the artist's observations on his early career developments.

As an artist, Prince himself is a collector, writer, and interpreter of cultural debris. Fascinated by the image-driven universe of commerce and consumption, and the question of authorship, he has spent four decades mediating visual culture through appropriation art strategies. Offering insights into the relationship between his evolving identity and art, the portraits and consumer items depicted in the work reflect many of the larger themes and gestures at play in the artist's work of the time. In Turnbaugh's own words: "Some of the pieces in this collection may at first glance be seen merely as common objects. But Richard is a master prankster, provocateur, poet, scientist, prestidigitator — he can transform a material object without altering its physicality into an idea, into art, into an icon."

Highly personal, the collection also attests to the intimacy and friendship shared between an artist and a collector. Prince sustained a direct flirtation with Turnbaugh's interest in collecting homoerotic and object art, creating a unique and additional object of interest in collecting to this impulse, while revealing an additional object of interest that clearly appealed to this impulse, while revealing an additional object of Prince's ongoing interest in the seduction of masculinity. Showing this collection with the public provides a rare glimpse into Prince's own developing narrative as a young artist in search of self-definition and recognition.

