

IMAGE 1



IMAGE 1: ROSENQUIST, JAMES. LANAI (64.16) 1964, OIL ON CANVAS, THE JOHN AND KIMIKO POWERS COLLECTION; IMAGE 2: ROSENQUIST, JAMES. PRESIDENT ELECT (61.02) 1960-61/1964, OIL ON MASONITE, CENTRE GEORGE POMPIDOU, PARIS, MUSÉE NATIONAL D'ART MODERNE/CENTRE DE CRÉATION INDUSTRIELLE.

FORGET WARHOL

Rosenquist is the Now Man

TEXT:

DAVE G.

With some of the hottest contemporary painters like Jeff Koons, Michel Majerus and Richard Phillips having bitten his buttery steez, pop artist James Rosenquist is back with a fluorescent-pink vengeance to give these new schoolers a lesson in staying power. As the recent Rosenquist retrospective in Houston proved, many artists today deserve detention for having ripped him off.

Originally trained as a billboard painter, Rosenquist rose to prominence in the pop art movement with his huge "new realist" canvases, rearranging mundane consumer imagery of 1960s America into dreamscapes of consumption that are both absurd and seductive. A sea of lipstick reflected in the chrome of a new high-tech teakettle; the latest model cars next

to buxom babes and glistening peaches; fighter planes and hair curlers – these paintings are nuanced precursors to *Adbusters* magazine and culture jamming. Rosenquist's work reminds us that pop art was genuinely critical, despite its sensational overtones and its cryptic star-fuck father figure, Andy Warhol.

With over 170 masterpieces in the show and elaborate displays of the techniques and collages Rosenquist used when creating his most influential works, you, too, can soak up the magic and become one of the hottest new painters. Remember who told you.

If you missed James Rosenquist: A Retrospective at The Menil Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, it opens in October at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

IMAGE 2

