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*"His is the act of the modern-day explorer. One that travels to investigate the semi-neglected pasts of people and cultures who challenge civilised narratives: lost cowboys who roam the Wild West their fates unknown; wannabe actresses on the west coast reinventing themselves over and over again making it impossible to intuit their origin. All are outsiders, tragic figures, disparate, lost and powerful. "*

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ABOUT

# RUSSELL YOUNG

Russell Young, born in 1959 in Yorkshire, is a British-American artist best known for his large-scale silkscreen paintings examining cultural icons, the nature of fame, and the souring of the American Dream. He has become one of the most collected and sought after artists of our time. Celebrities and the most discriminating collectors like Abby Rosen, the Getty's, Elizabeth Taylor, David Hockney, Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, David Bowie and President Barack Obama have added Russell's works to their collections. His larger than life screenprint images from history and popular culture are compelling, daunting, and undeniable.

Young's early life in Northern England was neither glitz nor glamour. Young was immediately put into a foster home, then a nunnery, and was adopted before reaching the age of one. The lack of a personal or even a shared history has left him free to explore dreams and fantasies of sometimes better, sometimes harsher worlds.

With few prospects other than working in the factory towns, Young lied about his age to attend art college at the age of fifteen. Had he not done so, he would have most likely moved to the streets of London and died.

He moved to the capital five years later and caught the attention of photographer Christos Raftopoulos, whom he assisted for several years. Raftopoulos introduced Young to another side of himself, building him his own darkroom, taking him to the opera, showing him the limits of his life did not need to confine him or his work. It was during this time—still rough in nature and occasionally homeless—he photographed the gigs of Bauhaus, Bruce Springsteen, R.E.M., Bob Dylan and Diana Ross. His innate eye for movement landed him photoshoots for magazines and eventually his first record sleeve cover for the 1986 album Faith by George Michael.

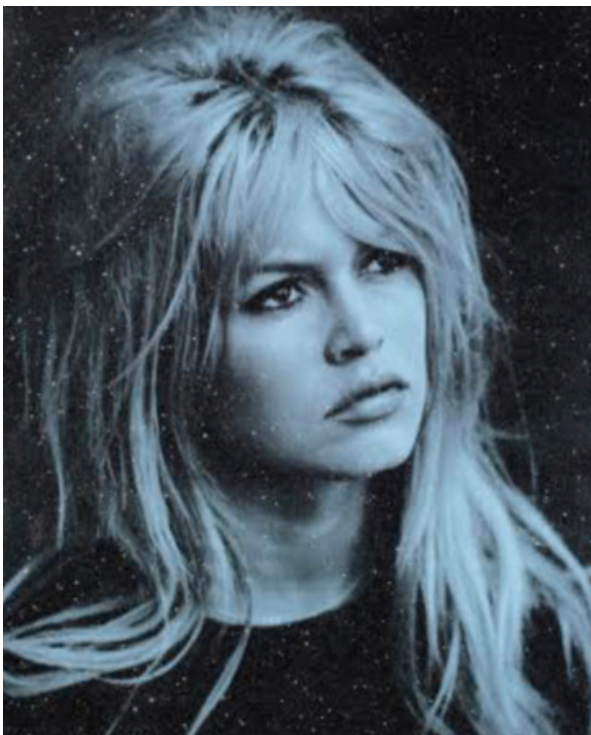
He went on to shoot over 100 music videos during MTV's height in the 1990s, which brought him to the United States. The rock star aesthetic he had brandished in his photography lent itself to his earliest screen prints that followed in the 2000s.



## PIG PORTRAITS

Ten years into his career, Russell started painting, but his work remained private. Until 2003, when Young showed his first series of paintings called Pig Portraits, this first show sold out. "Pig Portraits," displayed in LA in 2003, featured infamous celebrity mugshots (real and staged), capturing fame's monochromatic allure juxtaposed with the consequences of their actions.

*"My work is sort of the soundtrack to my life, loves, experiences and influences. My method of working is to search, destroy and create. The images of this series have been collected from celebrities estates, long correspondence with police departments throughout the world or even given by celebrities themselves. The idea to create "anti-celebrity" portraits was probably a reaction to my former career. However, they turned out to be even more beautiful and iconic. There is undeniably this attitude that is very real, in your face, a beauty that is hard to ignore. These would be my heroes that are missing from Art History." - RUSSELL YOUNG*



## FAME & SHAME

His Fame + Shame series explored American life as seen through the eyes of a young man growing up in England. Russell Young is interested in the places where the glamour of the American dream meets the darkness of crime, addiction, and death. He explores this in series such as "Dirty Pretty Things" (2010), in which screen printed images of notoriously tragic stars Marilyn Monroe and Kurt Cobain are sprinkled with diamond flakes.



## AN EVOLVING ART FORM: SCREENPRINTING

Today, Young remains true to his medium, screenprinting on the same printer originally used by cultural icon and Pop Artist Andy Warhol. Drawn to its texture and luminous finish, he often uses diamond dust in his works, a technique first discovered with an old bag of diamond dust, also previously owned by Warhol.

All of Young's backgrounds are painted by hand, using paints that he has mixed himself. Some canvases are printed up to nine times, each layer enhancing the tactile quality, and thus the depth, of his work. The colors help tell the story of who he is portraying. Kate Moss is rendered in Love Blue, Hunter Green and Melrose Pink. They might be named after the South London streets where the supermodel grew up, but these are rare pigments. The artist scours the world for them, from the vaults of Florence to the Egyptian desert and the mountains of California.

The colours are electrified by diamond dust after. With a diamond dust finish, it provides commentary on the glamour and excess of Hollywood and surrounding the notion of celebrity. His prints present a visual exploration that exposes both the excess, and ambition that has aided in shaping the "American Dream".

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*“Every painting I do informs the next painting but when you hang three or four or six colours next to each other, they all bounce off each other and there is a language between all the paintings, so they’re intertwined. ... As the colours have a story and one informs the next, so do the protagonists.” - Russell Young*

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## COLLECTORS

Albertina Museum, Vienna  
 Carlo Ancelotti, Madrid  
 Jennifer Aniston, Los Angeles  
 Kate Beckinsale, Los Angeles  
 The Benetton Foundation, Treviso, Italy  
 David Bowie, New York  
 The Core Club, New York  
 Cornell Art Museum, Florida  
 Beth DeWoody, New York  
 Drake, Hidden Hills, California  
 Kirsten Dunst, Los Angeles  
 The Getty Collection, Los Angeles  
 Goss-Michael Foundation, Dallas  
 Laurence Graff, New York  
 David Hockney, Los Angeles  
 Istanbul Museum of Modern Art, Istanbul  
 Marc Jacobs, New York  
 Kris Jenner, Los Angeles  
 Angelina Jolie, Los Angeles  
 Khloe Kardashian, Los Angeles  
 Floyd Mayweather, Las Vegas  
 The Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina  
 Mohammed VI of Morocco, Rabat  
 The Estate of Marilyn Monroe, New York  
 Kate Moss, London  
 Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow  
 Elon Musk, Los Angeles  
 Mark Zuckerberg, Palo Alto  
 Sharon Osbourne, Los Angeles  
 John Paulson, New York  
 Crown Prince Pavlos of Greece, Athens  
 Joaquin Phoenix, Los Angeles  
 Brad Pitt, Los Angeles  
 The Polk Museum of Art, Florida  
 The Qatari Royal Family, Doha  
 Lou Reed, New York  
 Aby Rosen, New York  
 The Saatchi Collection, London  
 Paul Smith, London  
 Daisy Soros, New York  
 Elizabeth Taylor, Los Angeles  
 Kanye West, Los Angeles  
 White House Collection, Washington, DC

## FORMAL TRAINING

Chester Art College  
 Exeter College of Art and Design

## MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

2019 Art Couture: The Intersection of Art and Fashion, Cornell Art Museum, Florida  
 2018 Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow  
 2018 Superstar, Modern Art Museum, Shanghai  
 2015 Forever Young: A Retrospective, Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, Florida  
 2012 A Retrospective, Goss-Michael Foundation, Dallas, Texas