

**Rainbow Elvis II**  
**Ron English**



Date : 2012  
Monoprint hand-painted screenprint with watercolor dyes  
37 1/2 x 17 in.  
Unique  
Pencil signed and numbered

## Artist bio

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Ron English is an American contemporary artist who explores popular brand imagery and advertising. His signature style employs a mash-up of high and low cultural touchstones, including comic superhero mythology and totems of art history, to create a visual language of evolution. He is also widely considered a seminal figure in the advancement of street art away from traditional wild-style lettering and into clever statement and masterful trompe l'oeil based art. He has created illegal murals and billboards that blend stunning visuals with biting political, consumerist and surrealist statements, hijacking public space worldwide for the sake of art since the 1980's.

Culture jamming is one aspect of his work, involving 'liberating' commercial billboards with his own messages. Frequent targets of his work include Joe Camel, McDonald's, and Mickey Mouse. Ron English can be considered the "*celebrated prankster father of dollar-pop*", who wrangles carefully created corporate icons so that they are turned upside down, and are used against the very corporation they are meant to represent. Ron English is considered one of the fathers of modern street art. Some of his extralegal murals include one on the Berlin Wall's Checkpoint Charlie in 1989 and one on the Palestinian separation wall in the West Bank in 2007, with fellow street artists Banksy and Swoon.

English is as well known for his photorealist technique and inventive use of color and comic book collage as he is for his unique cast of characters, including sexualized animals, skeletal figures, Marilyn Monroe with Mickey Mouse breasts, the corpulent fast food spokesman MC Supersized, and one of his most significant creations, Abraham Obama, a fusion of America's 16th and 44th Presidents.

English takes inspiration from Andy Warhol and references him in his work. He also references the band KISS, and various cartoons. Also inspiration comes from the large billboards and posters he sees outside his Jersey City apartment, usually fast food companies. English also references Picasso's Guernica. He has created dozens of versions, transforming the original Spanish civilian characters into Disney characters, Peanuts characters, soccer players, schoolchildren, and many others. He also painted the world's largest version of Guernica at the Station Museum in Houston. It is one foot longer and one foot wider than Picasso's original and features schoolchildren playacting the violent scene of the original.