



Rob Pruitt, his panda and Jerry Saltz, 2012; and Rob Pruitt's autograph on *New York* magazine's Nicki Minaj cover, 2012; both photos courtesy *New York* magazine

## Rob Pruitt SIGN HERE by Jerry Saltz

Share |

0

This past Saturday, I walked into Karma Book on New York's Downing Street to find neo-pop artist **Rob Pruitt**, the one who made that wonderful shiny statue of **Andy Warhol** now in Union Square, sitting completely naked except for a small panda in his lap. He was signing his book *Pop Touched Me* -- or anything else you might bring in.

I had *New York* magazine's Nicki Minaj cover from a few weeks back, and he quickly panda-ized her -- or maybe Mickey Moused her. I loved Pruitt's nerve to do this -- I mean, to sit naked. So openly and guilelessly. I've always thought art is a way for artists to dance naked in public. Pruitt literalizes this, keeping it poetic and pathos-filled in the process: being the butt of jokes that day, from "Is that a Panda in your pocket?" to "Your Panda has shrinkage," while smiling blithely, signing away all day. Ah, the art world.

**JERRY SALTZ** is art critic for *New York* magazine, where this essay first appeared. He can be reached at [jerry\\_saltz@nymag.com](mailto:jerry_saltz@nymag.com).

