

Parlor.



Robert rents his artwork monthly.

Artwork: Ricardo Gonzalez, *Good You Electric*, 2014, Acrylic on canvas, 56" x 62"



## GQ, Global Executive Design Director

# Robert Vargas

Parlor Collector Spotlight

**Q: What drew you to choosing this work/artist? How has the work changed your space?**

**RV:** In 2016 a friend brought me a postcard from one of Ricardo's exhibitions. I liked it so much that from then on I've been following his work. The painting has become the focal point of the entire apartment. It's the first thing you see when you open the door to the living room, and you can gaze at it from the dining and kitchen area. I connect with Ricardo's work on multiple levels, so I feel like it's a good representation of not only my aesthetic but personality, which makes my space feel more my own.

**Q: What has your art collecting experience been like? Can you tell us more about your journey and what led you to Parlor's rental model?**

**RV:** I've been collecting for as long as I was able to make enough to have some disposable income. The chronology of the type of work has correlated with what's been accessible to me, starting off with small prints and silkscreens, then lithographs and photographs, and most recently I acquired my first sculptural work. Almost everything I've had before Ricardo's painting has been an edition or multiple which is partially a result of my budget constraints. Finding Parlor allowed me to enjoy a large scale, original painting by one of my favorite artists in my home, which wouldn't have been possible otherwise.

**Q: What excites you about bringing art into your home?**

**RV:** Every time I bring a new piece into my home I feel like I'm building a little dialogue between it and what's already there. Each one not only connects to each other but also represents a different aspect of who I am. My political and spiritual beliefs, twisted imagination, dark humor, self-perception, aesthetic, and outlook on the world are all on display on my walls and tables. Just like music, I feel a personal connection to the artists that inspire me, and it makes me happy to be able to support them.

**Q: The pandemic has led all of us to spend more time at home. Have you discovered anything new about the works you're living with?**

**RV:** I've discovered a both obvious and underlying through-line with all the work I own. In the beginning when I had a couple or a few pieces, I never envisioned a grand plan for my collection, and thought that my tastes may change at some point. Now that I have 11 pieces (soon to be 12), I can confidently say I'm really into monochrome works. Everything I have is black and white or silver, or a very close approximation. I'm drawn to the purity of it, reminding me of the elemental tools of image-making: pencil and paper. Monochrome works also makes me feel like they really make you look at the forms, without the distraction of color. Thematically there is a slight darkness that runs through every work, even the ones that are funny or cartoonish on the surface. To me this connects with the reason I first starting drawing when I was teenager, to express the scary or dangerous thoughts and feelings that felt impossible to express with anything other than images.

**Q: Why do you find it important to support the arts and get involved with artists?**

**RV:** My own arts education changed the course of my life. To this day my high school art teacher perhaps had the most impact on me than any other teacher throughout my education. Without that I think I would've been lost. While I ended up defecting to creating in a corporate environment, I really admire those who are brave enough to devote their lives and careers to pursue pure self-expression, and the expression of ideas that matter to them. It's important for me to back artists who share my values, because I know there are many other people who will benefit from seeing and connecting with the same kinds of works. I also want not only to thank them, but to help support the entire idea of a personal artistic practice for all creatives who are bold enough to make that leap.