Modern Art in the Common Culture

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YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
New Haven and London

1996

ments were his, to be sure, but the conditions that lent them a style, and thereby a legibility, were imagined for him.

If one is puzzled about the meaning of a Renaissance painting, one turns eagerly to the stipulations of the contract between artist and patron in the lucky event that one survives. This approach to interpretation, straightforward in its logic, proceeds from the specified materials of a work of art and the implied uses to which it is to be put, the interests it is to serve. In the case of *Mural*, one knows the exact terms of agreement between artist and patron; there is further a rich body of commentary by the middlemen who brought it into being, actual modern counterparts to the shadowy "humanist advisers" so often conjured up in iconographical interpretations of Renaissance art. Far from being intrinsically an expression of up-to-date conditions of American capitalism, the large canvas owes its origins to the needs of an improvised, latter-day court, one modelled on traditional European conceptions of enlightened and self-flattering patronage. Nor was it, seemingly, one that could remain transplanted in the New World for long, as Guggenheim permanently removed herself and her collection to Italy when it became safe to do so. Her advancement of Pollock had been the principal gesture of accommodation by a courtly culture toward its temporary, democratic surroundings.

Having been born from such terms of exchange, the big canvas would always carry the meaning of stage and backdrop, nor was it, by any means, the first type of art meant to be faced away from by its principal users. The pathos of the situation for the artists who adopted the format was that they could not afford to acknowledge such originary meanings in their own practice. That implicit conflict led to resolute forms of denial and perhaps to certain acts of protest. Rothko's famous anxiety about the conditions in which his paintings would be seen – his desire for low lighting, isolation and a hushed, reverent atmosphere – can be taken as an instance of the former. Pollock may have registered an internal protest through physically violating the integrity of the canvas: Peggy Guggenheim had thought to cut a figure in front of her *Mural*; Pollock gave the expression a mockingly literal twist in *Cut Out* of 1948. But these efforts were relatively small and inescapably read as peripheral commentary in relation to the commanding presence of the large canvases. The automatic impressiveness of the grand format was an addiction from which none among this generation could break free, and Beaton was there to record the cruel bargain entailed in that dependence.

Saturday Disasters: Trace and Reference in Early Warhol

The public Andy Warhol was not one but, at a minimum, three persons. The first, and by far the most prominent, was the self-created one: the product of his famous pronouncements, and of the allowed representations of his life and milieu. The second consists of the complex of interests, sentiments, skills, ambitions, and passions actually figured in paint on canvas or on film. The third was his persona as it sanctioned experiments in non-elite culture far beyond the world of art. Of these three, the latter two are of far greater importance than the first, though they were normally overshadowed by the man who said he wanted to be like a machine, that everyone would be famous for fifteen minutes, that he and his art were nothing but surface. The second Warhol is normally equated with the first; and the third, at least by historians and critics of art, has been largely ignored.[1]

This essay is primarily concerned with the second Warhol, though this will necessarily entail attention to the first. The conventional reading of his work turns upon a few circumscribed themes: the impersonality of his image choices and their presentation, his passivity in the face of a media-saturated reality, the suspension in his work of any clear authorial voice. His subject-matter choices are regarded as essentially indiscriminate. Little interest is displayed in them beyond the observation that, in their totality, they represent the random play of a consciousness at the mercy of the commonly available commercial culture. The debate over Warhol centers around the three rival verdicts on his art: (1) it fosters critical or subversive apprehension of mass culture and the power of the image as commodity; (2) it succumbs in an innocent but telling way to that numbing power; (3) it cynically and meretriciously exploits an endemic confusion between art and marketing.[2]

A relative lack of concentration on the evidence of the early pictures has made a notoriously elusive figure more elusive than he needs to be – or better, only as elusive as he intended to be. The authority normally cited for this observed effacement of the author's voice in Warhol's pictures is none other than that voice itself. It was the artist himself who told the world that he had no real point to make, that he intended no larger meaning in the choice of this or that subject, that his assistants did most of the physical work of producing his art. Indeed, it would be difficult to name an artist who has been as successful as Warhol in controlling the interpretation of his own work.

In the end, any critical account of Warhol's achievement as a painter will necessarily stand or fall on the visual evidence. But even within the public "text" provided by Warhol, there are some less calculated remarks that qualify the general understanding of his early art. One such moment occurred in direct proximity to two of his most frequently quoted pronouncements: "I want everybody to think alike" and "I think everybody should be a machine." In this section of his 1963 interview with G.R. Swenson, he is responding to more than the evident levelling effects of American consumer culture. Rather, his more specific concern is the meanings normally given to the difference between the abundant material satisfactions of the capitalist West and the relative deprivation and limited personal choices of the Communist East. The sentiment, though characterized by the prevailing American image of Soviet Communism, lies plainly outside the Cold War consensus: "Russia is doing it under strict government. It's happening here all by itself. . . . Everybody looks alike and acts alike, and we're getting more and more the same way."[3] These words were uttered only a year or so after the Cuban Missile Crisis and within months of Kennedy's dramatic, confrontational appearance at the Berlin Wall. It was a period marked by heightened ideological tension, in which the contrast of consumer cultures observable in Berlin was generalized into a primary moral distinction between the two economic and political orders. The bright lights and beckoning pleasures of the Kurfürstendam were cited over and over again as an unmistakable sign of Western superiority over a benighted Eastern bloc. One had only to look over the Wall to see the evidence for oneself in the dim and shabby thoroughfare that the once-glittering Unter den Linden had become.

In his own offhand way, Warhol was refusing that symbolism, a contrast of radiance and darkness that was no longer, as it had been in the 1950s, primarily theological, but consumerist. The spectacle of overwhelming Western affluence was the ideological weapon in which the

Kennedy administration had made its greatest investment, and it is striking to find Warhol seizing on that image and negating its received political meaning (affluence equals freedom and individualism) in an effort to explain his work. Reading that interview now, one is further struck by the barely suppressed anger present throughout his responses, as well as by its ironizing of the phrases that would later congeal into the clichés. Of course, to generalize from this in order to impute some specifically partisan intentions to the artist would be precisely to repeat the error in interpretation cited above, to use a convenient textual crutch to avoid the harder work of confronting the paintings directly. A closer look at such statements as these, however, can at least prepare the viewer for unexpected meanings in the images, meanings possibly more complex or critical than the received reading of Warhol's work would lead one to believe.

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The thesis of the present essay is that Warhol, though he grounded his art in the ubiquity of the packaged commodity, produced his most powerful work by dramatizing the breakdown of commodity exchange. These were instances in which the mass-produced image as the bearer of desires was exposed in its inadequacy by the reality of suffering and death. Into this category, for example, falls his most famous portrait series, that of Marilyn Monroe. Complexity of thought or feeling in Warhol's *Marilyns* may be difficult to discern from our present vantage point. Not only does his myth stand in the way, but his apparent acceptance of a woman's reduction to a mass-commodity fetish can make the entire series seem a monument to a benighted past or an unrepentant present. Though Warhol obviously had little stake in the erotic fascination felt for her by the male intellectuals of the Fifties generation – Willem de Kooning and Norman Mailer, for example – he may indeed have failed to resist it sufficiently in his art.[4] It is far from the intention of this essay to redeem whatever contribution Warhol's pictures have made to perpetuating that mystique. But there are ways in which the majority of the Monroe paintings, when viewed apart from the Marilyn/Goddess cult, exhibit a degree of tact that withholds outright complicity with it.

This effect of ironic displacement began in the creation of the silkscreen stencil itself. His source was a black-and-white publicity still, taken for the 1953 film *Niagara* by Gene Koreman. (The print that the artist selected and marked for cropping exists in the archives of his estate [pl. 9].) A portrait in color from the same session, in which the actress reclines to one

9 Gene Koreman, publicity still of Marilyn Monroe for film *Niagara*, 1953. Courtesy the Estate and Foundation of Andy Warhol.

side and tilts her head in the opposite direction, was and remains today one of the best-known images of the young actress, but Warhol preferred to use a segment of a different, squarely upright pose. His cropping underlined that difference, using the outer contours of her hair and shoulders to define a solid rectangle, a self-contained unit at odds with the illusions of enticing animation normally projected by her photographs. Its shape already prefigures the serial grid into which he inserted this and the rest of his borrowed imagery.[5]

Warhol began his pictures within weeks of Monroe's suicide in August 1962, and it is striking how consistently this simple fact goes unremarked in the literature.[6] Some of the artist's formal choices refer to a memorial or funeral function directly: most of all, the single impression of her face against the gold background of an icon, the traditional sign of an eternal other world. Once undertaken, however, the series raised issues that went beyond the artist's personal investment in the subject. How does one handle the fact of celebrity death? Where does one put the curiously intimate knowledge one possesses of an unknown figure, come to terms with the sense of loss, the absence of a richly imagined presence that was never really there; for some it might be Monroe, for others James Dean, Buddy Holly, or a Kennedy: the problem is the same.

The beginnings of the *Marilyn* series also coincided with Warhol's commitment to the photo-silkscreen technique, and a close link existed between technique and function.[7] The screened image, reproduced whole, has the character of an involuntary imprint. It is a memorial in the sense that it resembles memory – sometimes vividly present, sometimes elusive, always open to embellishment as well as loss. Each of the two *Marilyn Diptychs*, also painted in 1962, lays out a stark and unresolved dialectic of presence and absence, of life and death (pl. 10). The left-hand side is a monument; color and life are restored, but as a secondary and unchanging mask added to something far more fugitive. Against the quasi-official regularity and uniformity of the left panel, the right concedes the absence of its subject, openly displaying the elusive and uninformative trace underneath. The right panel nevertheless manages subtle shadings of meaning within its limited technical scope. There is a reference to the material of film that goes beyond the repetition of frames. Her memory is most vividly carried in the flickering passage of film exposures, no one of which is ever wholly present to perception. The heavy inking in one vertical register underscores this. The transition from life to death reverses itself; she is most present where her image is least permanent. In this way, the *Diptych*

stands as a comment on and complication of the embalmed quality, the slightly repellent stasis, of the *Gold Marilyn*.

Having taken up the condition of the celebrity as trace and sign, it is not surprising that Warhol would soon afterwards move on to the image of Elizabeth Taylor. They were nearly equal and unchallenged as Hollywood divas with larger-than-life personal myths. Each was maintained in her respective position by a kind of negative symmetry; by representing what the other was not. Also in 1963, he completed a dominant triangle of female celebrity for the early Sixties with a picture of Jacqueline Kennedy, in the same basic format as the full-face portraits of Monroe and Taylor. The President's wife did not share film stardom with Monroe, but she did share the Kennedys. She also possessed the distinction of having established for the period a changed feminine ideal. Her slim, dark, aristocratic standard of beauty had made Monroe's style, and thus power as a symbol, seem out of date even before her death. (That new standard was mimicked within the Warhol circle by Edie Sedgewick, for a time his constant companion and seeming alter ego during the period.) The photograph of Monroe that Warhol chose was from the Fifties; through that simple choice he measured a historical distance between her life and her symbolic function, while avoiding the signs of ageing and mental collapse.

The semiotics of style that locked together Warhol's images of the three women represents, however, only one of the bonds between them. The other derived from the threat or actuality of death. The full-face portraits of the *Liz* series, though generated by a transformation of the *Marilyn* pictures, in fact had an earlier origin. Taylor's famous catastrophic illness in 1961 – the collapse that interrupted the filming of *Cleopatra* – had found its way into one of Warhol's early tabloid paintings, *Daily News* of 1962 (pl. 11). During that year, the rhythm of crises in the health of both women had joined them in the public mind (and doubtless Warhol's as well). In Jacqueline Kennedy's case, he ignored, for understandable reasons, the wide public sympathy over her failed pregnancy; but when the traumatic triangle was completed with a vengeance in November 1963, his response was immediate.

The Kennedy assassination pictures are often seen as an exception in the artist's output, exceptional in their open emotion and sincerity, but the continuity they represent with the best of his previous work seems just as compelling.[8] As with the *Marilyns*, the loss of the real Kennedy referent galvanizes Warhol into a sustained act of remembrance. Here, however, he has a stand-in, the widow who had first attracted him as an instance of celebrity typology. Again, he limits himself to fragmentary materials, eight

11 Andy Warhol, *Daily News*, 1962. Acrylic on canvas, 183.5 × 254 cm. Frankfurt, Museum für Moderne Kunst.

grainy news stills out of the myriad representations available to him. These he shuffles and rearranges to organize his straightforward expressions of feeling (pl. 12). The emotional calculus is simple, the sentiment direct and uncomplicated. The pictures nevertheless recognize, by their impoverished vocabulary, the distance between public mourning and that of the principals in the drama. Out of his deliberately limited resources, the artist creates nuance and subtlety of response that is his alone, precisely because he has not sought technically to surpass his raw material. It is difficult not to share in this, however cynical one may have become about the Kennedy presidency or the Kennedy marriage. In his particular dramatization of the newsprint medium, Warhol found room for a dramatization of feeling and even a kind of history painting.

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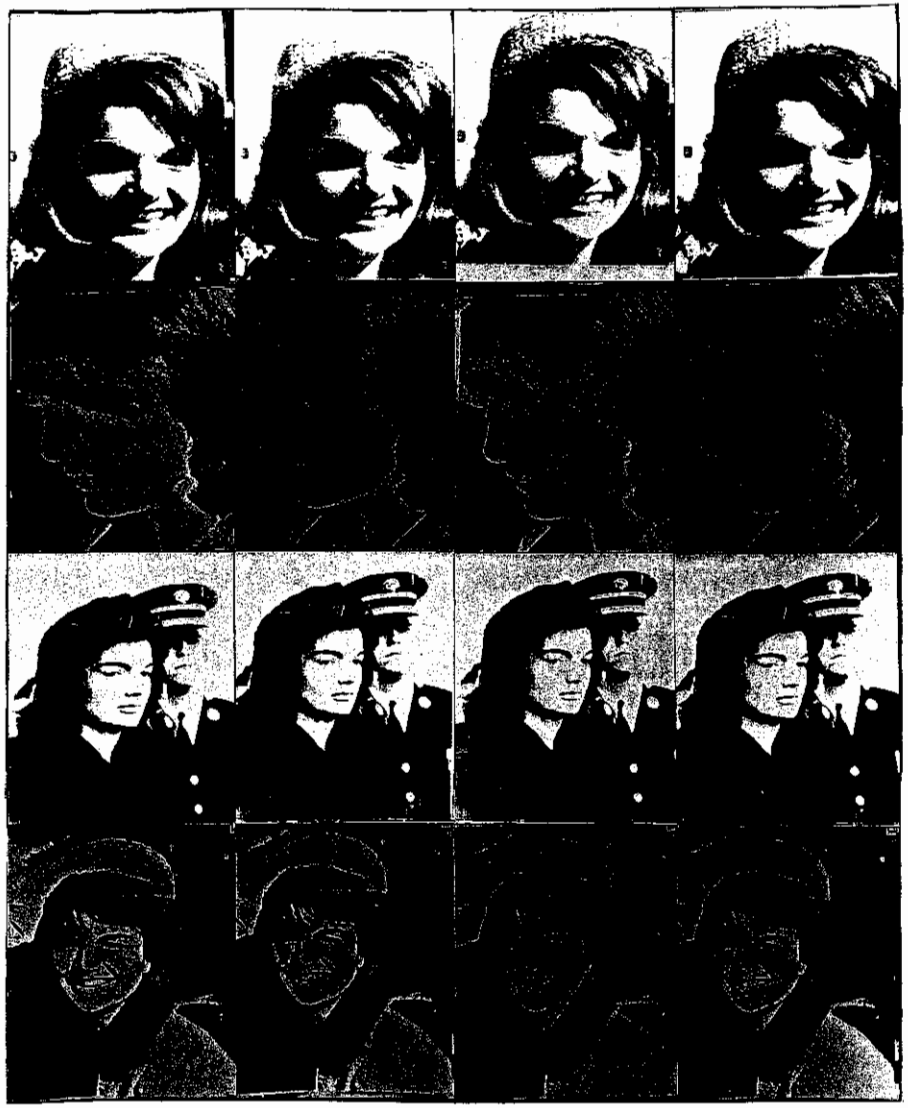
The account offered thus far has been grounded in the relationships between Warhol's early portraits. That line of interpretation can also be



12 Andy Warhol, *16 Jackies*, 1964. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen ink on canvas, 203 × 162.5 cm. Private collection.

13 Warhol, *Tunafish Disaster*, 1963. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen ink on canvas, 104 × 55.9 cm. Private collection.

extended to include the apparently anodyne icons of consumer products for which the artist is most renowned. Even those familiar images take on unexpected meanings in the context of his other work of the period. For example, in 1963, the year after the Campbell's soup-can imagery had established his name, he did a series of pictures under the title *Tunafish Disaster* (pl. 13). These are, unsurprisingly, lesser known works, but they feature the repeated images of a directly analogous object, a supermarket-label can of tuna. In this instance, however, the contents of the can had killed two unsuspecting women in Detroit, and newspaper photographs of the victims are repeated below those of the deadly containers. The wary smile of Mrs. McCarthy, the broad grin of Mrs. Brown, as each posed with self-conscious sincerity for their snapshots, the look of their clothes, glasses, and hairstyles, speak the language of class in America. The women's workaday faces and the black codings penned on the cans transform the mass-produced commodity into anything but a neutral abstraction.

More than this, of course, the pictures commemorate a moment when the supermarket promise of safe and abundant packaged food was disastrously broken. Does Warhol's rendition of the disaster leave it safely neutralized? While the repetition of the crude images forces the spectator's attention onto the awful banality of the accident and the tawdry exploitation by which one comes to know the misfortunes of strangers, they do not mock attempts at empathy, however feeble. Nor do they insist upon some peculiarly twentieth-century estrangement between the event and its representation: the misfortunes of strangers have made up the primary content of the press since there has been a press. The *Tunafish Disasters* take an established feature of Pop imagery, established by others as well as by Warhol, and push it into a context decidedly other than that of consumption. The news of these deaths cannot be consumed in the same way as the safe (one hopes) contents of a can.

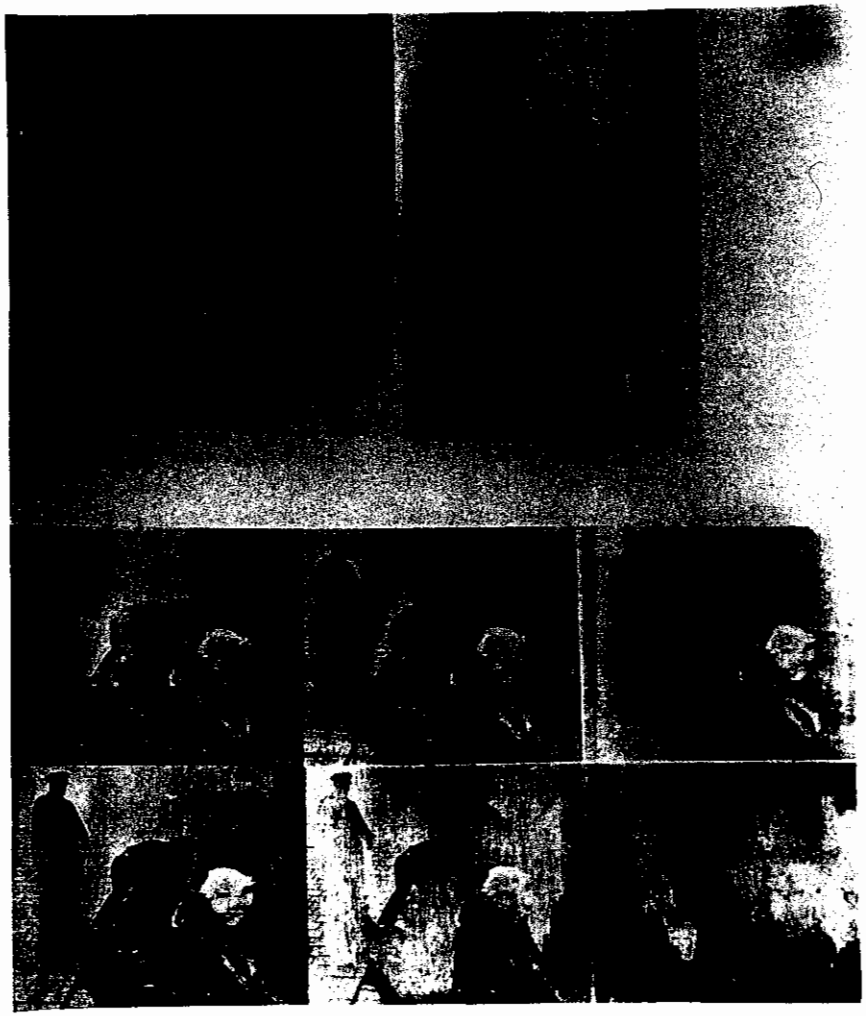
Along similar lines, a link can be made with the several Warhol series that use photographs of automobile accidents. These commemorate events in which the supreme symbol of consumer affluence, the American car of the 1950s, lost its aura of pleasure and freedom to become a concrete instrument of sudden and irreparable injury. (In only one picture of the period, *Cars*, does an automobile appear intact.) Does the repetition of *Five Deaths* or *Saturday Disaster* cancel attention to the visible anguish in the faces of the living or the horror of the limp bodies of the unconscious and dead? One cannot penetrate beneath the image to touch the true pain and grief, but their reality is sufficiently indicated in the photographs to expose one's limited ability to find an appropriate response. As for the

repetition, it might just as well be taken to register the grim predictability, day after day, of more events with an identical outcome, the levelling sameness with which real, not symbolic, death erupts into daily life.

In selecting his source material, Warhol was in no way acting as a passive conduit of mass-produced images that were universally available. Far from limiting himself to newspaper photographs that might have come his way by chance, he searched out prints from the press agencies themselves, which only journalistic professionals could normally have seen.[9] (Certain of these were apparently deemed too bizarre or horrific ever to be published; that is, they were barred from public distribution precisely because of their capacity to break though the complacency of jaded consumers.)

Not long after his first meditations on the Monroe death, Warhol took up the theme of anonymous suicide in several well-known and harrowing paintings. *Bellevue I* (1963) places the death within a context of institutional confinement. Again the result reinforces the idea that the repetition of the photographic image can increase rather than numb sensitivity to it, as the viewer works to draw the separate elements into a whole. The compositional choices are artful enough to invite that kind of attention. Take, for example, the way the heavily inked units in the upper left precisely balance and play off the void at the bottom. That ending to the chain of images has a metaphoric function akin to the play of presence and absence in the *Marilyn Diptych*; it stands in a plain and simple way for death and also for what lies beyond the possibility of figuration.[10] (This control, of course, could take the form of understanding the characteristic imperfections and distortions of the process, that is, of knowing just how little they had to intervene once the basic arrangement, screen pattern, and color choices had been decided.) In the *Suicide* of 1964, this orchestration of the void, all the fractures and markings generated from the silk-screen process, becomes almost pure expressionist invention (pl. 14).

The electric-chair pictures, as a group, present a stark dialectic of fullness and void. But the dramatic shifts between presence and absence are far from being the manifestation of a pure play of the signifier liberated from reference beyond the sign (pl. 15). They mark the point where the brutal fact of violent death entered the realm of contemporary politics. The early 1960s, following the recent execution of Caryl Chessman in California, had seen agitation against the death penalty grow to an unprecedented level of intensity.[11] The partisan character of Warhol's images is literal and straightforward, as the artist himself was wont to be,



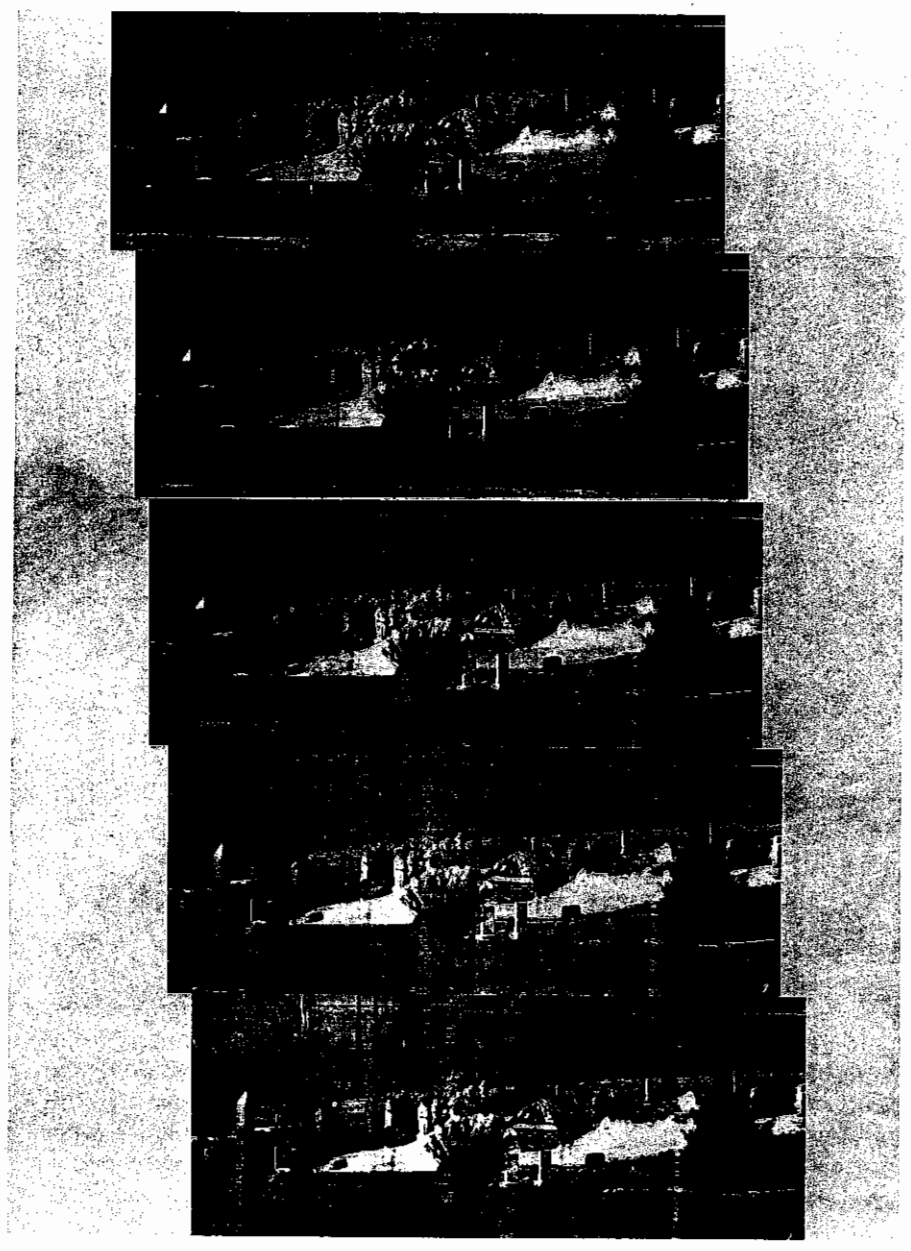
14 Warhol, *Suicide*, 1962. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen ink on canvas. Private collection.

and that is what saves them from mere morbidity. He gave them the collective title *Disaster*, and thus linked a political subject to the slaughter of innocents in the highway, airplane and supermarket accidents he memorialized elsewhere. He was attracted to the open sores in American political

15 Warhol, *Little Electric Chair*, 1963. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen ink on canvas, 55.9 × 71.1 cm. Private collection.

life, the issues that were most problematic for liberal Democratic politicians such as Kennedy and the elder Edmund Brown, the California Governor who had allowed Chessman's execution to proceed. He also did a series in 1963 on the most violent phase of civil-rights demonstrations in the South; in his *Race Riot* paintings, political life takes on the same nightmare coloring that saturates so much of his other work.

Faced with these paintings, one might take seriously, if only for a moment, Warhol's dictum that in the future everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes, but conclude that in his eyes it was likely to be under fairly horrifying circumstances. What this body of paintings adds up to is a kind of *peinture noire* in the sense that the adjective is applied to the *film noir* genre of the Forties and early Fifties – a stark, disabused, pessimistic vision of American life, produced from the knowing rearrangement of pulp materials by an artist who did not opt for the easier paths of irony or condescension. A picture such as the 1963 *Gangster Funeral* (pl. 16) comes over like a dispatch of postcards from hell.



16 Warhol, *Gangster Funeral*, 1963. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen ink on canvas, 266.7 × 192.1 cm. New York, Dia Art Foundation.

By 1965, of course, this episode in his work was largely over; the *Flowers*, *Cow Wallpaper*, silver pillows, and the like have little to do with the imagery under discussion here. Then the clichés began to ring true. But there was a threat in this art to create a true "pop" art in the most positive sense of that term – a pulp-derived, bleakly monochrome vision that held, however tenuous the grip, to an all-but-buried tradition of truth-telling in American commercial culture. Very little of what is normally called Pop Art could make a similar claim. It remained, one could argue, a latency subsequently taken up by others, an international underground (soon to be overground), who created the third Warhol and the best one.

of Melvin P. Lader, "Howard Putzel: Proponent of Surrealism and Early Abstract Expressionism in America," *Arts*, LVI, March 1982, pp. 85–96. Sweeney at this point was technically a member of the Museum of Modern Art's Junior Advisory Committee. He directed a number of exhibitions before assuming the formal staff position of Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture in 1945; see *The Museum of Modern Art: The History and the Collection*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1984, p. 22.

9 See Angelica Zander Rudenstine, *The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice*, New York: Abrams, 1985, p. 775. On Sweeney's role, see Stephen Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga*, London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1989, p. 442; on Putzel, see below.

10 Quoted in Weld, *Peggy*, p. 306.

11 Ibid., quoting Greenberg: "The contracts (with Guggenheim and later with Betty Parsons) were utterly unique for that generation of artists. . . ." For the terms of the contract, see Rudenstine, *Guggenheim Collection*, p. 641.

12 "Introduction," *Jackson Pollock*, New York: Art of this Century, 1943, n.p. Reproduced in facsimile in O'Connor and Thaw, IV, p. 230.

13 "Five American Painters," *Harper's Bazaar*, April 1944, quoted in B.H. Friedman, *Jackson Pollock: Energy Made Visible*, New York: McGraw Hill, 1972, p. 63.

14 On Pollock's annoyance in 1943 see Naifeh and Smith, *Pollock*, p. 463; for a facsimile of the polite reply he was persuaded to write to Sweeney, see O'Connor and Thaw, *Pollock*, IV, p. 230.

15 See Weld, *Peggy*, p. 306.

16 See Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, p. 295.

17 In Pollock's application for a Guggenheim Fellowship, in O'Connor and Thaw, *Pollock*, IV, p. 238.

18 See Pollock's letter to his brother Charles (July 1943) in O'Connor and Thaw, *Pollock*, IV, p. 228. The various accounts of witnesses to the making of the painting are usefully summed up in Naifeh and Smith, *Pollock*, p. 866. Karina Daskalov (unpublished paper, University of California, Berkeley) is justifiably sceptical as to whether the work could have been completed quite that quickly. Guests at the opening of Pollock's 1945 one-man show at Art of this Century were invited to inspect *Mural in situ* ("March 19, 1945, 3–6, 155 E. 61st Street, first floor," read the invitation: see reproduction in O'Connor and Thaw, IV, pp. 234–5).

19 The horizontal rectangle suspended in the middle of *Guardians of the Secret*, which he showed in 1943, served in retrospect as a staging in miniature of the abstract order he then applied to *Mural*.

20 Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, ed. John O'Brian, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, I, p. 65.

21 Ibid., II, p. 125.

22 Ibid., I, pp. 225–6.

23 On the identity of the Hare sculpture, see the 1971 statement by Marius Bewley in Virginia Dortch, *Peggy Guggenheim and Her Friends*, Milan: Berenice, 1994, p. 115.

24 "American Fashion: The New Soft Look," American *Vogue*, 1 March 1951, pp. 156–9.

25 Beaton's negatives and contact sheets from the sessions, along with some unused color transparencies, are preserved in his archives at Sotheby's, London. I want to thank Philippe Garner and Lydia Cresswell-James of Sotheby's and David Mellor for their assistance.

26 See Guggenheim, *Out of This Century*, p. 296; David Hare told Weld (*Peggy*, p. 326) that he assisted Duchamp at the installation.

Chapter 3

1 There are as yet only fragmentary accounts of this phenomenon. For some preliminary comment, see Iain Chambers, *Urban Rhythms: Pop Music and Popular Culture*, London, 1985, pp. 130ff.

2 For an example of the first, see Rainer Crone, *Andy Warhol*, trans. J.W. Gabriel, London: Thames and Hudson, 1970, *passim*. For the second, see Carter Ratcliff, *Andy Warhol*, New York: Abbeville, 1983, *passim*. Andreas Huyssen, "The Cultural Politics of Pop," *New German Critique*, IV, Winter 1975, pp. 77–98, gives an illuminating view of the effects of this view in Germany. For the third, see Robert Hughes, "The Rise of Andy Warhol," in B. Wallis, (ed.), *Art after Modernism*, New York: Godine, 1984, pp. 45–57.

3 In an interview with G.R. Swenson, "What Is Pop Art?" *Art News*, LXII, November 1963, p. 26. See also the comments about this statement by his closest assistant at that time, Gerard Malanga, in Patrick Smith (ed.), *Warhol: Conversations about the Artist*, Ann Arbor: UMI, 1988, p. 163:

> . . . if you remember by reading that really good interview with Andy by Gene Swenson in '63, in *Art News*, where Andy talks about capitalism and communism as being the same thing and someday everybody will think alike – well, *that*'s a very political statement to make even though he sounds very apolitical. So, I think, there was always a political undercurrent of Andy's unconscious concerns for politics, or of society for that matter.

4 De Kooning titled one of his *Woman* series after her in 1954. Norman Mailer's fascination with the actress is rehearsed at length in his *Marilyn, A Biography*, London: Hodder, 1973.

5 The essential discussion of that grid, along with other key conceptual issues, is Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Andy Warhol's One-Dimensional Art," in Kynaston McShine (ed.), *Andy Warhol: A Retrospective*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989, pp. 39–57. An instructive comparison can be made between Warhol's neutralization of that mannered form of self-presentation and Rosenquist's Monroe painting of 1962: for all the fragmentation and interference that the latter artist imposes on the star portrait, its false seductiveness is precisely what he lingers over and preserves.

6 Crone, *Warhol*, p. 24, dates the beginning of the Monroe portraits in a discussion of silkscreen technique, without mentioning the death. Ratcliff, *Warhol*, p. 117, dates the first portraits to August in a brief chronology appended to his text, also without mentioning her death in the same month.

7 See Crone, *Warhol*, p. 24, who dates Warhol's commitment to the technique to August 1962. The first screened portraits, he states, were of Troy Donahue. Maco Livingstone, "Do It Yourself: Notes on Warhol's Technique," in

McShine, *Warhol*, pp. 69–70, discusses in further detail Warhol's turn to silkscreen techniques during 1962.

8 See, for example, John Coplans, *Andy Warhol*, New York, n.d., p. 52.

9 See Malanga interview in Smith, *Warhol*, p. 163.

10 This control, of course, could take the form of understanding and anticipating the characteristic imperfections and distortions of the process, that is, of knowing just how little one had to intervene once the basic arrangement, screen pattern, and color choices had been decided. See the illuminating, if somewhat self-contradictory interview with Malanga, in Smith, *Andy Warhol's Art and Films*, Ann Arbor: UMI, 1986, pp. 391–2, 398–400. See also Livingstone's remarks ("Do It Yourself," p. 72) on the ways in which the rephotographed full-size acetate would be altered by the artist ("for example, to increase the tonal contrast by removing areas of half-tone, thereby flattening the image") before its transfer to silkscreen, as well as on the subsequent use of the same acetate to plot and mark the intended placement of the screen impressions before the process of printing began. Warhol's remarks in a conversation with Malanga (*Print Collector's Newsletter*, January–February 1971, p. 126) indicate a habit of careful premeditation; he explains how the location of an impression was established if color was to be applied under it: "Silhouette shapes of the actual image were painted in by isolating the rest of an area on the canvas by means of masking tape. Afterwards, when the paint dried, the masking tape would be removed and the silk screen would be placed on top of the painted silhouette shape, sometimes slightly off register."

11 For a summary of press accounts of the affair, see Roger E. Schwed, *Abolition and Capital Punishment*, New York, 1983, pp. 68–104.

Chapter 4

1 Cheryl Bernstein (i.e., Carol Duncan and Andrew Duncan), "The Fake as More," in Gregory Battcock (ed.), *Idea Art*, New York, 1973, pp. 41–5. It has lately been acknowledged and republished by Carol Duncan in a collection of her writings, *The Aesthetics of Power*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 216–18; see also her discussion of the origins of the parody and its fictitious author, ibid., pp. 211–15.

2 Gerald Marzorati, "Art in the (Re)Making," *Art News*, June 1986, p. 91.

3 Bernstein, "Fake," pp. 42, 44–5.

4 Peter Halley, "The Crisis in Geometry," *Arts*, Summer 1984, p. 115.

5 Bernstein, "Fake," p. 42.

6 The literature on Sturtevant (b. 1926) is scandalously sparse. For a selection of early work with commentary, see Eugene M. Schwartz and Douglas Davis, "A Double-Take on Elaine Sturtevant," *File*, December 1986, n.p.; interview with Leo Castelli and Dan Cameron, *Flash Art*, November/December 1988, pp. 76–7.

7 See C. Carr, "The Shock of the Old," *Village Voice*, 30 October 1984, p. 103.

8 See Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," and "Towards a New Laocoon," in *Collected Essays and Criticism*, ed. John O'Brian, University of Chicago Press, 1986, I, pp. 5–37.

9 See Marzorati, "Art in the (Re)Making," p. 96.

10 Halley, "Crisis," p. 115.

11 See "Mythologies: Art and the Market. Jeffrey Deitch Interviewed by Matthew Collings," *Artscribe International*, April/May 1986, pp. 22–6; Douglas C. McGill, "The Lower East Side's New Artists," *New York Times*, 3 June 1986, p. C13.

12 Charles Harrison, "Sculpture, Design, and Three-Dimensional Work," *Artscribe International*, June/July 1986, p. 62.

13 See the retrospective remarks of its editors in their introduction to Annette Michelson (ed.) et al, *October: The First Decade*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987, p. x.

14 See Harrison, *Essays on Art and Language*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1991, pp. 45–6, for development of this point.

15 Rosalind Krauss, to her credit, has lately begun to address the actual abstraction of the art economy: see "The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum," *October*, 54, Fall 1990, pp. 3–17; "Overcoming the Limits of Matter: On revising Minimalism," *Studies in Modern Art*, 1, 1991, pp. 123–41.

16 See, for example, Krauss's remarks on the theoretical writing of Peter Halley, "Theories of Art after Minimalism and Pop: Discussion," in Hal Foster (ed.), *Discussions in Contemporary Culture*, Seattle: Bay Press, 1987, pp. 76, 82.

17 Ibid.

18 See Douglas Crimp, "The Photographic Activity of Postmodernism," *October*, no. 15 (Winter 1980), pp. 98–9.

19 For an overview of the time, see Foster, "Signs Taken for Wonders," *Art in America*, May 1986, pp. 83–91.

20 Conversation with the artist, May 1986.

Chapter 5

1 The Editor (sic), "About *October*," *October*, 1, Spring 1976, p. 3.

2 *Artforum*, October 1967, p. 4: he concludes, "The upper surface is supposed to be three inches above another surface, flush with the rest of the box."

3 "About October," p. 5.

4 Anders Stephanson, "Interview with Craig Owens," *Social Text*, 27, 1991, p. 68.

5 Documenta IX in Kassel and the Pittsburgh Carnegie International are prominent examples, along with *Doubletake*, mounted at the London Hayward Gallery, discussed below (all held in 1992).

6 Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Beuys: The Twilight of the Idol: Preliminary Notes for a Critique," *Artforum*, January 1980, pp. 35–43.

Chapter 6

1 The quotation is from Andrew Ross, "On Intellectuals in Politics (reply to Richard Rorty)," *Dissent*, Spring 1992, p. 263. Rorty's observation in reply (p. 266) of "the scene in *Conan the Barbarian* in which Schwarzenegger snaps the homosexual's spine, or Ice Cube's rap about burning down Korean-owned