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BA Thesis: The Documentary Images in Arts

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**Shopping With Andy:
The Image in American Pop Art and Advertisement.**

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1.Introduction

Madison Avenue and Greenwich village meet in pop art. The world of advertisement and art developed a relationship that continues to seduce the audience today. The career and afterlife of Andy Warhol (1928-1987) successfully illustrated this synergy. Warhol offered an artist's statement to the 1962 edition of *Art in America*, prophesying the use of images. He wrote: "I adore America and these are some comments on it. My image is a statement of the symbols of the harsh, impersonal products and brash materialistic objects on which America is built today. It is a projection of everything that can be bought and sold, the practical but impermanent symbols that sustain us" (42). Warhol, with this statement, remarked on America and his work's role as a mirror of life in the United States. Therefore, his 'image' is not only that of his work but also his later brand and status.

It is apparent that, advertisement tactics for targeting customers and the fascination of the pop art movement with consumer culture developed a complex circulation of images. This partnership resulted in a complex and problematic exchange of visual language. Advertisers used platforms to operate on, one that was already widespread and deeply embedded in American society, media with large circulations. Pop art communicates in the same register as corporate and commercial structures by employing the same signals and images. This is the point at which pop art becomes indistinguishable from any other product, as evidenced by the pop art movement's predilection for mass producing and selling mass amounts of numbered prints for example. Therefore, advertising and the media formed an initially mutual connection that profoundly changed the perception of culture and 'high' art for the audience. Everyday commodities that the average consumer saw on their everyday trip to their local supermarket, became a fine art artwork, in a very Duchampian way. Pop art, then, reflected on the mediality of culture and the aesthetics of advertising. Furthermore, the

terms ‘audience’ and ‘consumer’ get entwined, with pop art audiences becoming consumers, and vice versa.

Not should it be no surprise that one of the most influential American pop artists, Andy Warhol, was deeply fascinated by the media and celebrity world the Americana was providing. In this regard, the example of Andy Warhol, a cultural personality who blended the realms of art and stardom, is illuminating. As it turned out, Warhol used advertisement methods in his art that he acquired as a young illustrator for example, the use of the photo-silkscreen process for *Campbell’s Soup Cans* (1962). It would become his distinctive medium and relate his art creating practices more closely to those of advertisements (MoMA). The photo-silkscreen method was initially designed for commercial usage. “I don’t think art should be only for the select few,” he claimed, “I think it should be for the mass of the American people” (MoMA).

In this supermarket of images Warhol was pillaging and reselling recognizable images to the American consumer. However, in the paradoxical capitalist system of American advertising, it is not only art that uses commercial images but also the other way around. While the corporate advertising—pop art’s imagery market—determined which objects possessed aura, for commercial reasons, it also created and disseminated that aura. As a result, the concept of an image was seen as distinct: a brand image drew attention to a consumer product and gave it a public personality (Gluibizzi 23). To this regard, now in the twenty-first century, the fast-food company Burger King used the scene ‘Andy Warhol: Eating a Hamburger’ from Jørgen Leth’s 1981 film *66 Scenes of America*, as its 2019 Super Bowl commercial. Considering the nature of the company –fast food—and the program that the commercial aired –Super Bowl—it can be concluded that we are dealing with divine irony. The American dream combined some significant American stereotypes to produce a commercial that, as we will examine here, navigates the labyrinth of Americana where it

seems there is no way out. Warhol reached the same stardom of his celebrity subjects. He almost obsessively showcased and criticized himself. This clash of American ideals and icons with advertisement or artwork evokes my interest in examining the origin, relationship, and contemporary acceptance of this complex relationship. Therefore, in this thesis I aim to understand and interpretate the circulation, pillaging, and re-use of popular images in a variety of media and diverse contexts. The research question that will guide me is: “What is the linkage between American advertisement imagery in Andy Warhol's series of ads from the early 1960s and the use of Warhol’s image in the #eatlikeAndy 2019 commercial?”. Additionally, sub questions with a focus on Andy Warhol’s early work are: What were the effects of the pillaging of commercial images in pop art? What was the role of consumer culture in the selection of images of Andy Warhol in the early 1960s? Finally, the sub question regarding the Burger King commercial is: What can be said about the impact of the #eatlikeAndy 2019 Super Bowl clip?

In order to gain insight into the aforementioned questions, I will base my research on a theoretical framework of the supermarket of images, visual semiotics, and advertisement. Christin J. Mamiya and Amanda Gluibizzi’s contributions to the study of advertisement in visual culture studies illustrate how advertisement images can be utilized to gain a richer understanding of art. In *Pop Art and Consumer Culture: American Supermarket*, Mamiya argues that the pop movement took the mass-production ethos and employed the techniques that had resulted in corporate supremacy (14). Pop art did more than mirror consumer culture in this way—it realigned the cultural community to be more congruent with corporate patterns, and in doing so, it contributed to the legitimacy of that same system (14).

This thesis aims to take these reflections on the visual culture of advertisement as a starting point by looking at the relationship between advertising images and pop art.

Furthermore, the study of images and their persuasive power have been explored by Roland

Barthes in his essay “Rhetoric of the Image.” Barthes analyzed how images are constructed, how meaning is created around them, and how they function within culture. Similarly, Anthony E. Grudin, in his article “A Sign of Good Taste: Andy Warhol and the Rise of Brand Image Advertising” argued that the selection of images Warhol used in his early work – Campbell’s, Coca-Cola, for example—were selected in a similar mannerism as advertisers used to target consumers. Warhol’s reconfigurations of these brand images, according to Grudin, highlight the strengths and limitations of an ambitious marketing approach that remains potent and omnipresent to this day (214).

As the previous paragraph has showcased, I will use secondary sources to collect and examine academic literature that fits the research question. The literature will be collected through online databases such as JStor and academic books such as *Pop Art and Consumer Culture: American Supermarket*, and *The Consumer Society*. In addition, I will consider parts of Andy Warhol’s autobiography, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again*. Furthermore, in my thesis, I will analyze examples from the early work of Warhol between 1950 and 1965 and the recent 2019 commercial from Burger King. As for the latter, in order to analyze and research the reverse effect on culture and consumers of the Super Bowl commercial, I will use non-academic sources from online articles. I will do so through online research, as the commercial clip is too recent, and not much has been written about it. Through visual analysis, I will analyze the examples and explain in what ways the advertisement strategies become visible in Warhol’s work and how Burger King used his persona during their PR promotion of the commercial.

In this concluding paragraph, I will provide a brief summary of the chapters of my thesis. First, I will begin my thesis with an introduction in which I will discuss the issue and its academic relevance. In addition, I shall state my research question in the beginning. The first chapter will then provide an outline of my theoretical framework. In my second chapter,

the first of two analytical chapters, I will investigate and explain the notion of the supermarket of images and its influence on Andy Warhol's early work. My third chapter will look at the strategies described in the previous chapters and how they were reversed from art to commerce with the Super Bowl 2019 #EatLikeAndy commercial. My thesis will conclude with a chapter that refers my research question, summarizes my key arguments, and reflects on the complicated link between advertising imagery and art in visual culture studies.

2.Theory

The most prominent proponent of the pop art movement, Andy Warhol, is often regarded as “the most famous American artist of the twentieth century” (1). Andy Warhol became and evolved into the 1960s pop art movement mega-star. Numerous pop artists works were exhibited and institutionalized in every major New York gallery, and numerous pop artists have maintained commercial success (1). Pop art not only represented and reflected unbridled consumption but also absorbed corporate culture’s methods and strategies, ensuring effective marketing of this movement and its incorporation into the ‘matrix¹,’ of consumer institutions (1). While consuming has always been a pillar of the American capitalist economy, the 1950s and 1960s were a watershed moment in consumer culture history (2). To elaborate, a culture is termed a consumer culture when a society's activities and ethics are dictated by consuming habits (2).

To further understand the role of pop art in consumer culture and vice versa, we must study the term through the lens of Jean Baudrillard’s theories. Baudrillard’s analysis of consumer culture is that, by the end of the 1960s, advanced capitalist economies had reached a point where consumption had “taken hold of the whole of life” (Walton 208). So far, as fundamental features of contemporary capitalist societies increasingly “fall under a logic of significations,” requiring an analysis of codes and symbolic systems (208). Baudrillard maintained that the act of consumption was not just about consuming commodities but messages such as signs or brand icons (208). Baudrillard was implying—which is much clearer in today's hyper-branded culture, as will be shown later—that when we buy goods, we buy into what they are designed to represent (208-209). Hence, our identity is negotiated

¹ An institutional matrix is a sustainable system of basic institutions which regulates the main spheres of social life: economy, politics, and ideology (Kirdina-Chandler 478).

within consumption rather than outside of it due to the wants elicited by these cues (209).

Andy Warhol once put it more plainly. When one of his interlocutor² observed, “It’s not so much the thing I want as the idea of the thing,” Warhol replied, “Then that’s just advertising” (Warhol 195). Baudrillard regarded consumption as so pervasive that even art had become commodified and incorporated into the logic of signals and consumption (Walton 210). This notion, according to Baudrillard, was reflected in 1960s pop art (210). Andy Warhol’s early work revealed the logic of consumption, removing “the traditional sublime status of artistic representation” (210). This implies that the traditional art object was treated as a “sacred object with a depth vision of the world” (210). However, pop art—with representations of these products seen in supermarkets—is akin to the more superficial world of advertising (210). As a result, these works represented the “manufactured character” of the industrial mass production system that typified the socioeconomic context they were created (210). From this, Baudrillard presents a series of complex arguments, one of which is the potential of viewing pop art as “an American art,” in the sense that its products have “no other truth than the mythology that swamps them” (Baudrillard 135). This is the point at which consumer culture is “trapped in its own mythology,” with no critical perspective on itself (Walton 210). Pop art’s factory-like creation echoes the assembly line of industrial production, and product brand names represent the art itself (210). This is a realization of consumer culture’s “obvious truth” which is that the reality of objects and commodities is their brand name (210). By using the same signs and images, pop art communicates in the same register as corporate and the economic structure in which it is manufactured (210). This is when pop art becomes progressively “indistinguishable from any other commodity,” as seen by the pop art movement’s proclivity for mass manufacturing of art works (210).

² In his book *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, Warhol was not revealing the names of his interlocutors. Several people, men and women, are named B. With Warhol sometimes, referring to himself as A.

Fredric Jameson, like Baudrillard, sees Warhol's work as revolving "centrally around commodification," reflecting Warhol's roots as a commercial illustrator (231). This confirms his conviction that the entire Pop art movement, as a postmodern gesture, was complicit with the imperatives of late capitalism's development and fitted into its defining logic (231). As a result, there appears to be no fundamental distinction between commercial images and art in postmodernism: they are the same thing (231). In this regard, postmodern art lacks the political dimension of high modernism: Warhol's paintings "ought to be powerful and critical political statements" against late capitalism's "commodity fetishism," rather than extensions of it (231). Consequently, the parody of the use of commercial images, capitalizes on the originality of these styles, using its quirks and oddities to create a replica that mocks the original (Jameson 113). If there is any reality left here, it is a "realism" born of the shock of recognizing that confinement and realizing that, for whatever strange reasons, we are doomed to seek the historical past – in this case tracing our first meeting with the image – through our own cultural pop images and preconceptions about that past, which itself remains forever out of reach (131).

Furthermore, art, like all visual imagery, encodes societal values (Mamiya 3). Because cultural and historical factors influence the viewer's reaction to an artwork that predisposes him or her to particular readings or favors specific interpretations, meaning is formed from the image's context (3). The interaction between visuals and the social environment determines meaning continually contested (3). As a result, every attempt to attach permanent, intrinsic significance to specific visuals is ineffectual (3). The meaning and impact of pop art imagery in the 1960s can be traced in part to the works' substance, which is related to 1960s American consumer culture (3). Pop art's subject matter was instantly recognized, ranging from Hollywood personalities to home appliances and food products, having emerged from advertising, grocery shelves, movie and television screens (3).

Moreover, the visual style and production processes used in creating these artworks were related to the worlds of marketing, advertising, and mass media (3). Given that all pop artists' backgrounds involved significant work in commercial art, this relationship is not surprising (3). The power of visual representations to mediate, contradict, maintain, or strengthen ideological statements given by consumer culture will be demonstrated by examining the artworks (3). On the other hand, pop art's ties to consumer culture go beyond the images themselves. The method in which these works were displayed and received is more critical in assessing the popularity of this art movement (5). Aside from the apparent accessibility of the visuals, pop's acceptability was due to adjustments in the equilibrium within this institutional web (5).

However, more crucial to pop's success was that the pop movement seized the mentality that was basic to mass production and employed the techniques that had resulted in corporate dominance (14). In this way, pop art did more than represent consumer culture—it caused a realignment of the cultural community to be more congruent with corporate patterns, contributing to the legitimacy of that same system (14). Later art criticism and history reflected the pop artists' notion of presenting a whole and unadulterated image (14). According to Roland Barthes, such imagery tended to be presented unspoiled by the artist's sensibility (Gluibizzi 21). "Pop art produces certain 'radical images' by dint of being an image, the thing is stripped of any symbol," he wrote (21). Because the commercial image was intended to be consumed in one sitting, pop art recreated the same power dynamic of consumerism in its entirety (22). Pop artists understood this and openly adopted such tactics as their own (22). Advertisements with adequate images and focus on awakening the desire, reverse the auratic equation established by Walter Benjamin (22). Now, the ads themselves – and the images within them – determined which objects held aura and, at the same time, created and distributed that aura (22). As a result, the concept of an image was considered

unique: a brand image drew attention to a consumer product and gave it a public character (23). Therefore, the variety of pictures available to pop artists from the American supermarket of images resulted in image circulation. According to de Paume, “images of the economy always involve the economics of the image. And vice versa, as if there were a recto and a verso to all of them” (de Paume). Hence, the circulation of images is eternally bound to the economic past of the image and vice versa. As it will be later argued, tracking an image’s origins is an important step to decoding the semiotics of any artwork or advertisement.

Thus, circulation is both more and less than movement, and it extends well beyond the domain of what can be represented graphically (Brunet 22). The history of art is littered with unintended circulations: reuses of objects that were never supposed to be reused, apparitions of works that were never meant to be seen (22). Most notably, reproductive media has facilitated an unprecedented spread of circulation is indeed more and less than movement (23). It extends well beyond what can be represented graphically (23). Warhol commented that his image projects “everything that can be bought and sold, the practical but impermanent symbols that sustain us” (Gluibizzi 24). In his way, Warhol was the image-maker who distributed the American image worldwide, which may be related to his involvement with the ideas and methods that were being created in the advertising design industry at the same time (24).

Moreover, as Warhol rose to fame, his persona and image required its own status. Someone can argue that for most of his life he used the media and, in his afterlife the media used him. His fixation with the celebrity culture, it bore fruit as he became a branded image that other corporations can use to fuel capitalism. It appears that media production is image-driven, obsessed with fame, glamour, personality, and celebrity in all of its forms (Kerrigan 1509). In this way, the cultural logic of celebrity organized recursively as a mode of production, operates through celebritisation discursive practices (1510). Thus, celebritisation

describes what happens when the logic of celebrity is used as a mode of production for economic calculation and marketing purposes (1510). Celebrity fuels the libidinal economy and makes exchange spectacular (1504). It creates media products and content, commoditizing celebrity's public image (1504). Media interests create spectacles in cultural networks where symbolic resources are marshaled to the collective logic of commodity representation (1505). In this regard, the case of Andy Warhol is instructive, as a cultural figure who merged the worlds of art and celebrity (1512). His success was thus an illustration of the processes, a pioneering pop artist who built his art and celebrity persona as a brand with a clear commercial mission of commodification and distribution (1512). Warhol established himself as a brand, which is still one of the most powerful in the world. This procedure recognized the significance of symbolic capital in the formation of the celebrity (brand) (1513). According to Bourdieu, symbolic capital is the form that various types of capital take when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate and, it arises only when there is a recognition of common meaning within a certain group (1511). Moreover, the contemporary concepts of fine art, art marketing, and artist branding are all related to Warhol's work and his brand name (1513). Without the benefit of branding theories, Warhol engaged in and applied his own blend of marketing concepts, allowing him to reach new heights of profitable branding (1514). The symbolic capital and consumption of his name, image, and art, as well as his diverse, avant-garde style and eccentric personality, became key constituents of his own brand of identity and framed the reasons why Warhol fans were (and still are) attached to the symbolic meaning constructed around Brand Warhol (1514). Since the 1960s and even after his death, he distinguished and positioned his products in a privileged position and at the forefront of the art market.

3. Commercial Images in Early Andy Warhol

This chapter aims to investigate the effects of pillaging commercial images in pop art and the role of consumer culture in the selection of images of Andy Warhol in the early 1960s. I will focus on specific artworks of Warhol and trace the commercial images who acted as his muses. I will argue that the commercial culture of the time influenced Warhol's career and the reception of his works from the public.

The 1960s saw a rapid growth in the field of processed foods (Mamiya 44). The number of products available for purchase in supermarkets and the size of the firms that created such commodities increased dramatically (44). Grocery-store chains grew in the postwar years due to the profitability of the food-retailing business (44). They were expanded to warehouse-scale to handle the variety of products; one industry insider lamented, "today's supermarket has become a stupormarket" (44). Appropriately, tests conducted in the late 1950s revealed that while entering supermarkets, most shoppers entered a hypnoidal state, the initial stage of hypnosis (44). The dizzying array of prepared products on supermarket shelves enticed buyers who perceived the added convenience as a significant advantage (45). However, in the food business, the late 1950s and 1960s were characterized by focusing on marketing rather than significant engineering or technological improvements (45). Customers' price increases in supermarkets were due to marketing charges rather than product development expenses (45). Regardless, few consumers could resist the appeal of the abundance and prosperity represented by the food store's bulging shelves (45). On the other hand, pop art imagery is rich with representations of grocery items (45). These pieces use imagery from the realm of canned, processed, mass-produced foods and replicate the advertising for these products on both a visual and conceptual level (45). Del Monte, Coca-Cola, Pepsi Cola, and Campbell Soup are just a few companies whose products frequently appear in pop art (49). Because of their overrepresentation in the consumer environment and

imagery and extensive ad campaigns waged in the early 1960s, these specific corporations' goods were included in pop artworks (49). In 1962, Warhol painted a picture of a Del Monte can (*Peach Halves*) (see fig. 1) (51). The ostensibly incomplete painting is composed of a single can with an unfinished label and dripping pigment, disclosing the influence of Abstract Expressionism (51). Despite the lack of a defined context or background and the inchoate character of the label itself, the image preserves its immediate recognizability, an important quality for any mass-marketed product's success (51). The single can depicted belies the massive "quantities of these cans that flooded the market" (51). Warhol depicts various aspects of the production and marketing process in his various works (52).

Moreover, in 1961 Coca-Cola spent \$50 million on their advertising campaign, while Pepsi spent \$34 million (54). In *Close Cover Before Striking (Coca-Cola)* (1962, see fig. 2) and *Close Cover Before Striking (Pepsi-Cola)* (1962, see fig. 3), Warhol discusses the ubiquitous nature of these advertisements (54). These works are formatted identically except for slogans and logos and were created by the same corporation (the American Match Company) suggests market parity (54). Each image is focused on the distinctive logo, with no mention of the qualities that made each soda appealing (54). Manufacturers were primarily concerned with brand recognition and maintaining their products in the spotlight (54). Campbell Soup Company was another monolithic firm that was the topic of pop art (68). Like the other corporations described above, this corporation dominated its industry (68). In 1961, Campbell Soup launched a large advertising campaign in response to a strong push from other companies (68). Andy Warhol's various paintings of Campbell's soup are among the most well-known images of the brand (68). So much so that Campbell's soup, still uses this linkage for commercial gain. Among his works are *100 Cans* (1962 see fig. 4), which evokes the same ideas as his paintings of Coca-Cola bottles. The neatly stacked cans and repetitive labels inspire imagery of shop shelves, while the constant repetition implies the can's

contents' unchanging predictability (68). To make the paintings, Warhol projected a commercial image of the soup can from a magazine advertisement onto a pre-stretched canvas, delicately drew the shape, then meticulously filled in the color sections, striving to avoid any hint "of artistic manipulation" (Athens 46). The painted cans' hard edges, pure color planes, and sharp, stylized reflections appear to have been manufactured mechanically, similar to the printing method used to generate the magazine advertisement (46-47). The pseudo mechanical look of Campbell's paintings suggests that they are merely an "extension or reiteration of the print" advertisement, especially given the artist's manner of projecting and tracing the source picture (47). Nonetheless, despite their flatness and reduced brushwork, they retain traces of the artist's hand, such as reducing the intricate Campbell's seal to a smooth, gold disk (47). While the Campbell's series' mirroring of commercial iconography gives the paintings the appearance of being just highly anticipated illustrations, they are, "in the modernist sense," true, one-of-a-kind pieces of art (47). Despite Warhol's continual motif of the Campbell, each piece is a unique work of art created by the artist's hand (47). They exist in a specific place and time; the artist is said to have "stretched the canvas, mixed the paints, and applied them in the pattern" shown on the picture's surface (47). Campbell's paintings are both ads and genuine art works that demonstrate Warhol's ability to convert commercial imagery into fine art (47).

Another essential point of Warhol's early work is creating the experience of a supermarket shopping trip (see fig. 5). In *Boxes*, the exhibition shown at the Dwan Gallery in Los Angeles in February 1964 and the Stable Gallery in New York in April 1964, Brillo boxes were densely stacked throughout the galleries, making movement through the exhibition difficult (see fig. 6) (Mamiya 48). The responses to this display reveal that the analogy to a stockroom was forcefully made (48). One observer asked: "Is this an art gallery or Gristede's warehouse?" critic Sidney Tillim described the Stable exhibit as "a very neat

warehouse,” and critic Lawrence Campbell compared it to “the storage room of an A&P”³ (48). Dealer Eleanor Ward described a woman who “came in... took one look, and ran out...screaming. She said that it reminded her of her mother’s grocery store” (48). As Leon Kraushar, one of Warhol’s early collectors, put it, “The only reason you’ll know they’re art is because they’re in my house” (Zinsser 28).

Therefore, Warhol not only extracted popular American advertising imagery for his work but also continued to play with the experience and tease the audience by transforming them into everyday consumers. During the same year, 1964, Warhol participated in the exhibition *The American Supermarket*, held at the Bianchini Gallery in New York from October 6 to November 7 of the same year. For the analysis of this exhibition and Warhol, I will heavily refer to Michael’s Lüthy essay “The Consumer Article in the Art World.” For Lüthy, Warhol used his participation to this exhibition to generate and make his most relevant work, if not his best, considering the borderline between art and non-art (150). A stack of original soup cans, signed and declared to be art or ‘a Warhol,’ costing many times the typical price, was displayed beneath a silk-screen diptych of two Campbell’s cans (see fig. 7) (150). Warhol divided artistic creation into two parts: the fabrication of a non-artistic object and its subsequent, unaltered transformation into a work of art (150). While the signing rendered the can of soup inoperable and, conversely, enjoying the soup would have resulted in the “destruction of art,” it was evident that the production of things and the production of art were counterbalanced (150). Hence, Warhol’s change had a lesser impact on the item itself and a much more significant impact on the way people thought about it and interacted with it, changing the notion of art (150). According to Lüthy, this indistinguishability of art

³ The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, better known as A&P, was an American chain of grocery stores that operated from 1859 to 2015.

and non-art permitted the distinctions between artworks and commodities to be set against each other in such a tenacious manner (150).

While Warhol's success as an illustrator was built on a deliberately intimate and distinctive trade style, he found his artistic style to be diametrically opposed to what corporations desired (151). Ironically, he used all these commercial strategies in his later career. His commercial past introduced him to the pictorial language of serialized, reproducible silk-screen images (151). Warhol experimented with the tension between the idiosyncratic and the mass-produced, repetition and variation (151). The themes that piqued his interest were things that no one had made and yet had individuality, they were 'unique' despite their abundance (151). For example, Campbell's soup cans considered classic because their label design had remained consistent for decades, or Coca-Cola's bold red color and logo (151). The mode of production that Warhol adapted to create his work came to the point where the printing of a packaging differed faintly from Warhol's (151). The difference was on the reproduction, instead of a machine Warhol was printing the same image himself (151). Not only did the object take on a reproductive and serial identity, but so did Warhol's paintings and sculptures (151). Enforcing the idea of a replica and stylized image.

Hence, according to Jean Baudrillard, when an object becomes symbolic, it ceases to be banal (Baudrillard 137). The actual dictionary definition of the word 'banal,'⁴ prompts the argument Baudrillard is making. Pop according to him claims to be the art of the banal—It calls itself 'pop(ular)' art on these grounds (137). The object—artwork—becomes banal in the moment it is used, for example a can of Campbell's soup (137). For Baudrillard, the 'reality' of the modern item is no longer to be used for something but to symbolize; it's no longer to be controlled as an instrument but as a sign (137). And it is the success of pop at its

⁴ Banal: lacking in originality as to be obvious and boring

best that demonstrates this to us (137). According to Baudrillard Andy Warhol, is the most extreme in his approach, is also the artist who best encapsulates the theoretical contradictions in this art practice and the challenges it faces in imagining its true purpose (137). “The canvas is an absolutely everyday object, like this chair or that poster,” he says, as ever there is “this desire to absorb art, to rehabilitate it, in which there is both American pragmatism – terroristic insistence on the useful, integrationist blackmail” – and something resembling an echo of the mystique of sacrifice (137). “Reality needs no intermediary, all you have to do is isolate it from the environment and put it on canvas,” he continues (137). This is the crux of this complex matter: the everydayness of an object is precisely its context, and more specifically, the mass-produced context of all comparable or nearly similar objects and so on (137). By isolating the image on the canvas, Warhol eliminates all of its everydayness. While also depriving the object depicted on the canvas of its character as an everyday item, which, according to Warhol, it should certainly resemble (137). This is a well-worn dead end: art cannot be incorporated into daily life, nor can it capture the everyday routine as such (137). “Immanence and transcendence” are both impossible: they are two sides of the same dream (137).

To summarize, we can think that it was only natural, as a former commercial illustrator, to focus on images of commodities for Warhol. However, in comparison with his former career, the reasons for these choices may differ. As a pop artist, Warhol now needs to sell his work, and he is doing so by creating a desire and buzz for his artwork. Nevertheless, by using preexisted images of brands, he extracts and uses the symbolic signals of these objects. Warhol engages in ongoing tango with the audience about what is real and what is art. His determination for success and his narcissistic tendencies leave no room to speculate if it was on purpose or not. It is not surprising that this ambiguity has been polarizing critics and the art world until nowadays.

4. Art Images on Burger King Commercial

This chapter aims to investigate the impact of the #eatlikeAndy 2019 Super Bowl clip and the importance of Warhol's image as legacy.

Andy Warhol idolized hamburgers (Frye 32). He not only painted a Hamburger series, but he also made films of people eating hamburgers (32). For example, *Mario Montez and Boy* (1965) is a four-minute Warhol film in which Mario Montez and Richard Schmidt share a hamburger while kissing (32). Typically, Warhol would also appear in hamburger-themed art (32). Jørgen Leth, a Danish filmmaker, captured Andy Warhol eating a hamburger in 1981 for his film *66 Scenes From America* (32). Unannounced, Leth arrived at Warhol's studio and indicated he wanted to film Warhol eating a hamburger (32). Warhol liked the concept and agreed quickly (32). Leth arranged for Warhol to be filmed at a studio on 14th Street and 5th Avenue and had his assistant buy a variety of hamburgers (32–33). “Where is the McDonald's?” questioned Warhol when he arrived. “I thought you would not want to identify...” said Leth. “No, that is the most beautiful,” Warhol replied (33). Leth offered to have his assistant purchase a McDonald's hamburger, but Warhol declined, saying, “No, never mind, I'll take the Burger King” (33). “You simply have to eat this hamburger,” Leth told Warhol (33). And then, when you are finished, just tell the camera, “My name is Andy Warhol, I have just eaten a hamburger” (33). Leth filmed Warhol in a single 5-minute take (33). Warhol finished the hamburger in roughly three and a half minutes and disposed of the trash (33). He then sat for a minute and stared at the camera before announcing, “My name is Andy Warhol, and I just finished eating a hamburger” (33). The sequence concludes with Leth saying, “Burger, New York” (33). Consequently, the corporations whose pictures Warhol appropriated did not ignore the universalization; they were ready to recover the value he brought to their brands (Grudin “A Sign of Good Taste” 223). On February 4, 2019, Burger King released the aforementioned clip as an advertisement during the fourth quarter

of Super Bowl LIII, exposing more Americans than ever before to this once-obscure piece of film ephemera (Campbell-Schmitt). In addition, this was Burger King's first Super Bowl commercial in 13 years (see fig 8). However, Burger King's head of worldwide marketing, Marcelo Pascoa, believes the risk of using this experimental film as the commercial comeback of the company, was worthwhile (Campbell-Schmitt). "We are always looking for ideas that elevate the Whopper, our most iconic burger. And we are always looking for ideas that can promote the Burger King brand as a relevant part of pop culture in a powerful, legitimate way," Pascoa wrote in an email to the magazine *Food & Wine* (Campbell-Schmitt). He added, "The Whopper is America's favorite burger and having an icon such as Andy Warhol eating it shows that with confidence. It is also the best kind of endorsement we could hope for because it comes from someone who was not paid by Burger King to endorse the product. Our brand is all about authenticity and there is really nothing more authentic than that" (Campbell-Schmitt).

Ironically, in his book *The Philosophy* Andy Warhol stated: "Some company recently was interested in buying my 'aura'. They did not want my product. They kept saying, 'We want your aura.' I never figured out what they wanted. But they were willing to pay a lot for it. So then I thought that if somebody was willing to pay that much for it, I should try to figure out what it is" (Warhol 77). For Warhol, 'aura'⁵ is something that only other people can see, and they can only see as much of it as they want (77). It's all in the eyes of the beholder. Subsequently, the discussion of Warhol about his aura, brings once again the notion of authenticity and, auratic theory of Benjamin. Both Benjamin and Warhol recognized that widespread reproduction and distribution of 'art' merely shifts artistic aura from one ritual site to another: from the gallery, "to the image via the cult of celebrity and its attendant iconography" (Kerrigan 1509-1510). In an era of social media and target advertisement, when

⁵ It is important to note that for Warhol, aura relates to fame as well, and not only to product.

new ritual sites are constantly emerging as auratic wellsprings, Warhols' fascination with the packaging and reselling of his 'aura' seems quite contemporary (1509). However, to reflect on the dynamic at work here, Kerrigan proposes the terms 'celebritised' and 'celebritisation' as they emerged throughout the sixties (1509). He is regarding the brand as a circulating "media object" (1509). The object or thing resulting from media attention is then an example of what Lury refers to as "the broadcast distribution of commodities" (1509). "The spot is meant to break through the traditional Super Bowl commercial break, filled with explosions, slapstick jokes and celebrities, with an almost silent, yet powerful work of art," Burger King declared in a press release (West). While the company's representatives declared a "break from celebrities," the choice of this particular film suggests otherwise. Burger King obtained permission from the Warhol Foundation—a little credit line at the bottom states, "Andy Warhol utilized by permission of The Andy Warhol Foundation" (West). It also obtained approval from Leth's representatives, including his son (West). "One of the things that was unique about the negotiation was that we didn't want to change or touch the film in any way that would take away from its original intent," Pascoa explained to *AdAge* (West). "We knew that the best thing we could do would be to keep the film as intact as we could" (West). This highlights the issue of authenticity, which is brought to light as a result of these manipulations, or what Rojek refers to as "staging presence through the media" (Rojek 17). In this way, the recursive cultural logic of celebrity operates through discursive processes of celebritisation (Kerrigan 1510). Thus, celebritisation occurs when the logic of celebrity is used as a form of production for economic calculation and marketing purposes (1510). In this way, the cultural logic of celebrity (and the celebrity of celebrity) lies at the heart of spectacular consumer culture: after all, as Andy Warhol famously stated in 1968, "in the future, everyone will be world-famous for fifteen minutes" (1510). Rojek further distinguishes between these categories and celebrities due to severe levels of media

saturation, which we frequently refer to as ‘famous for being famous,’ referring to these persons as ‘celetoids’ (1510). These categories help comprehend the strategies of Warhol’s celebritisation (1510). However, as helpful as these categories appear, they disguise the complexity and subjectivity of their analytical function (1510). To neatly slot a specific individual into one of these categories necessitates using a set of values, measures, and comparisons (1510). However, in the paradoxical concept of Americana, Warhol had his own ideas on what art and commerce do. He wrote, “I didn’t expect the movies we were doing to be commercial. It was enough that the art had gone into the stream of commerce, out into the real world. . . Business art. Art business. The Business Art Business.” (Warhol 92-93). Thus, as previously argued, 1960s Warhol brought the ‘real world’ into art and later art merged back to the real world. The world of business.

As previously stated, the scene in which Warhol is eating the hamburger is from the film *66 Scenes from America*. So, depicting Andy Warhol as an icon eating a hamburger represents the images of everyday America. It is American because Warhol and fast-food commodities represent the national identity of the American people. These cultural associations can be viewed as components of a lexicon, the various parts of which can be combined to form grammatical patterns of conventionalized representations that impact interpretation (Walton 51). In this context, Roland Barthes produced a well-known concept: is the non-coded iconic communication (48). This may appear to be a paradox, but Barthes highlighted here that simple, literal (iconic) object recognition is still a sort of communication (48). This notion should become evident compared to what Barthes referred to as coded-iconic signals (48). Thus, Burger King promotes the desire for their product by using the ingrate idea of an American idol – Warhol, and burgers. Burger King had been advertising its #EatLikeAndy campaign in advance by releasing a clip with a mysterious footage of The Burger King (Burger King’s mascot) painting (West). It was captioned *Art Takes Time* and

encouraged followers to sign up for a “Mystery Box Deal” with DoorDash, a meal delivery service (see fig. 9) (West). Those who ordered the Mystery Box received a parcel containing a ketchup bottle, a vintage Whopper wrapper, a Warhol-esque wig, and a DoorDash coupon for a Whopper that instructed you to order one when the game was on (see fig. 10) (West). Pre-commercial, these props caused considerable amusement because their final meaning was not apparent until Warhol appeared onscreen (West). The audiences’ reactions were mixed, and the hashtag #EatlikeAndy during that night was trending on Twitter (see fig. 11, 12). ‘Ironization’ is advertising’s desperate bet that cynicism can be neutralized homeopathically by incorporating it into the advertisement itself (Grudin “Except Like a Tracing” 163). This is a commercial world and a subject position that is still very much in play (163). The “King” mascot of Burger King revels in its own faux-nobility; customers are expected to giggle at the commercial’s awkwardness even as it entices them to buy (163). However, the symbolism of Warhol eating a burger and the scenario itself being exploited by a corporate speaks to the heart of every American consumer. It generates the necessary desire through the celebritisation of Warhol. Warhol illuminated the American consumer behavior and accessibility of commodities with this humorous quote:

What’s great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest Coca-Cola, and you can know that the President drinks Coke, Liz Taylor drinks Coke, and just think, you can drink Coke, too. A Coke is a Coke and no amount of money can get you a better Coke than the one the bum on the corner is drinking. All the Cokes are the same and all the Cokes are good. Liz Taylor knows it, the President knows it, the bum knows it, and you know it. (Warhol 100-101)

During his career, the brands shown by Warhol may have gained prominence as icons within a work of visual art; also, the inclusion of iconic brands in his work strengthens Warhol's position as a champion of the American dream (Kerrigan 1514). This is continued and extended when he begins to focus on human icons in his later work, celebrating their pictures in addition to his promotion of unknown people as superstars seeking their "fifteen minutes of fame" (1514). The artist recognized the power and equity of his renowned brand image and, as a result, became the brand manager of his own brand of pop art strategy (1514). Warhol never concealed his ambition or narcissism; he delighted in establishing his work as a commodity, subject to the rule of exchange, by recreating himself (and those around him) as attractive commodities within the capitalist market system (1514). Warhol also learned how to deal with the various forms of capital prevalent in the art industry (1514). In the art world, economic capital is less important than cultural or symbolic capital in determining value (1514).

To conclude, the previous chapter followed the journey of commercial images to the art world of Warhol. This chapter reversed the route and followed the art image back to its commercial origins. The art image, in this case, is Warhol himself, who at this point is considered one of the first mega-artists whose work and lifestyle intertwine into one. It can be argued that with his fixation on stardom and television, Warhol was fully aware of the relationship of art images and commerce. He knew the Art Business game and was good at playing it. Even after his death, Warhol's manipulation of reality and art haunts us. Raising, the question, is it art or reality?

5.Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have tried to show how images circulate in and across various domains that, in the public mind, seem separate. The worlds of advertisement and art, however, have been shown to mutually influence each other. Andy Warhol and the afterlife of his eating a burger illustrate that image circulation is a complex process in a visual consumer culture. From his heavily influenced supermarket images in his early work to the final commodification of his brand by a corporation (Burger King). I explored how different factors were woven into his complex artistic identity. Pop art brought attention to the quickly expanding consumer ethic through its continuous and forceful allusions to images and practices that had a demonstrable immediacy in the 1960s. Although these pictures of consumer goods cannot be considered outright celebrations of consumerism, the reception of pop art demonstrates that they were, for the most part, regarded as such. Aside from that, the critical aspect is that pop art actively participated in the conversation produced by consumer culture. Warhol's astute marketing ensured his popularity and catalyzed the monetization of art. Pop art focused on the immediacy and recognizability of commodities transaction images while simultaneously promoting the consumer culture.

These factors contributed to the very choice of Burger King to use the clip as a commercial. As I argued before, the celebritisation of Warhol's image acted the same way the commercial images acted back in the 1960s for him. They both used the attention these images brought. Warhol attracted the public by playful blurring the lines between art and reality, and Burger King used Warhol (and his relationship, as mentioned earlier, with the American culture) to become 'trending' on social media. Burger King, in a way, became the artist and Warhol the new 'Coca-Cola.' Every American could have a piece of him through the 'Mystery Box.' In the same way, Liz Taylor and a random 'bum' could share the same Coca-Cola.

Thus, this thesis illustrates the relationship between art, advertisement, consumerism, and capitalism and how they continue to flourish in the fertile land of American culture. All these factors intertwine, cancel, and verify each other in a loop. A Warhol image is not just an art image. They are deep-rooted socio-cultural meanings that resurface, dressed in the superficiality of pop culture's veil.

While researching the complicated connection between art imagery and commerce, it became clear that various elements play a role. Although my study concentrated on the circulation and effect of Warhol, I did not address the social aspects of commercial imagery in detail. As this is outside of my research subject, it would be desirable for a future study to investigate the marketing targeting consumer tactics corporations' use. Furthermore, the Burger King advertisement was too recent, and scholarly study on it is lacking. However, since the ad incorporates a component of popular culture, I am ambitious that this provides a good starting point for discussion and further research. Lastly, further research can explain the public response to the Super Bowl ad in more depth, as well as how Warhol's imagery has transformed in the twenty-first century in contrast to the peak of his career.

Appendix: Figures



Figure 1. Warhol, Andy. *Peach Halves*. 1962, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart , Stuttgart.

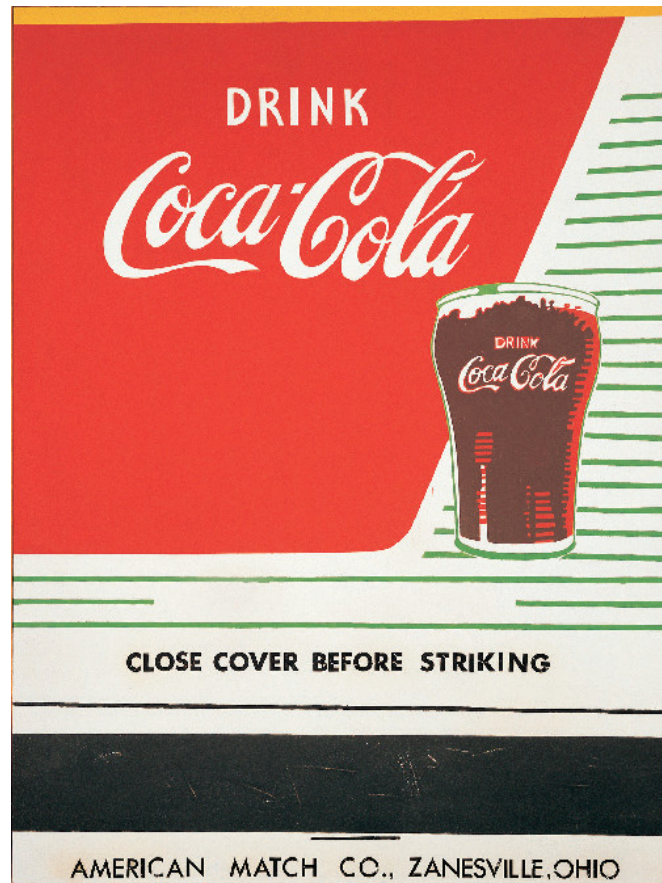


Figure 2. Warhol, Andy. *Close Cover Before Striking (Coca-Cola)*. 1962.



Figure 3. Warhol, Andy. *Close Cover Before Striking (Pepsi)*. 1962. Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany.



Figure 4. Warhol, Andy. *100 Cans*. 1962. Collection Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York.



Figure 5. Adelman, Bob. *Andy Warhol shopping at Gristede's supermarket on Second Avenue*. 1965.



Figure 6. McDarragh, Fred W. *Andy Warhol with Brillo Boxes*, Stable Gallery. 1964. Steven Kasher Gallery.



Figure 7. Dauman, Henri. *The American Supermarket* at Bianchini Gallery. 1964



Figure 9. Still from *Burger King - #EatLikeAndy The Whole Whopper*. 2019. Youtube



Figure 8. DoorDash. "Mystery Box Advertisement for Burger King and DoorDash." 2019, Medium.



Figure 10. Nathan (@natek711). Photograph of DoorDash PR Box. *Twitter*.



Figure 11. RanaAwdishMC (@RanaAwdish). Image of a Diagram. *Twitter*.



Figure 12. Art and Labor (@ArtandLaborPod). Photograph of a Man Watching the Commercial. *Twitter*.

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