

ANDY WARHOL: POMO PIMP, POP TART, META-STAR

by

MICHAEL ANGELO TATA

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York  
2004

UMI Number: 3144145

Copyright 2004 by  
Tata, Michael Angelo

All rights reserved.

### INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

**UMI**<sup>®</sup>

---

UMI Microform 3144145

Copyright 2004 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company  
300 North Zeeb Road  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

©2004

MICHAEL ANGELO TATA

All Rights Reserved

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

8/20/04  
Date

W Kostenbaum  
Chair of Examining Committee

8/23/04  
Date

A. F. Key  
Executive Officer

Prof. Wayne Koestenbaum

Prof. Meena Alexander

Prof. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

ANDY WARHOL: POMO PIMP, POP TART, META-STAR

by

MICHAEL ANGELO TATA

Advisor: Professor Wayne Koestenbaum

*Andy Warhol: POMO Pimp, Pop Tart, Meta-Star* takes a two-pronged approach in its examination of visual artist, filmmaker and social oddity Andy Warhol. Using both philosophy and biography, it plots the ramifications of Warhol's aesthetics, while using personal data to string together an eminent life. In an effort to separate yet conjoin aesthetic analysis and historical exposé, this dissertation divides schematically into two parts, titled "Theories" and "Elements." "Theories" takes to its logical limit art philosopher Arthur Danto's notorious idea that Warhol's 1964 *Brillo Boxes* ends art. Tracing Danto's conclusion back to Hegel's earlier assessment of Romanticism as bringing the project of art to completion, "Theories" seizes upon the category of the sublime as ideal corrective for Danto's prognosis. Using concepts provided by Longinus, Immanuel Kant and Edmund Burke, it traces out the contours of a postmodern sublimity within Warhol's words, images and appearances. Traveling along another route, "Elements" identifies and fleshes out four Warholian

conceptual pillars: (1) counter-revolution, (2) the drug narrative, (3) machinehood and (4) meta-celebrity. Circling these focal points, “Elements” veers from arguments for and against a postmodern sublimity toward Warhol’s own ideologies, proclivities and obsessions as these have informed his own creative output. Tracking Warhol’s affiliations with conservative political figures (Imelda Marcos, the Shah of Iran), rabid substance abusers (Brigid Berlin, Liza Minnelli), servo-mechanistic equipment (tape recorders, robots) and all grades of famous individuals (film royal Elizabeth Taylor, 80s club institution Dianne Brill), this portion of the dissertation gazes intently at vital bodies populating Warhol’s worlds.

## Acknowledgments

“The Postmodern Tingle: Brillo ↔ Brillo” first appeared under the title “The Pomo Tingle: From Mundanity to Sublimity and Back Again” in *From Virgin Land to Disney World: Nature and Its Discontents in the USA of Yesterday and Today* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2001).

## **Table of Contents**

### **/theories**

#### **1.1 Post-Warhol? Prolegomena to Any Future Aesthetics (2-36)**

**The Burden of Superficiality (2) • Why Warhol? (14) • Kant after Duchamp, Hegel after Warhol (24)**

#### **1.2 Plastic Inevitability, Aesthetic Instability (36-72)**

**Infinity in a Drop of Soup (36) • Neither Here Nor There (44) • More (52) • Less (65)**

#### **1.3 The Postmodern Tingle: Brillo↔Brillo (73-108)**

**Kitsch Fulfillment (73) • Amphetamin Co-pilots (80) • Nothing Special (85) • Of Lemons and Phantom Limbs (93) • The New *Ipsos* (100)**

#### **1.4 Arabesques and Inwardness: Romantic Paradigms (109-145)**

**The Beginning of the End (109) • Transcendental Buffoonery (112) • A Day Like Any Other (120) • Lost in Space (127) • Total Oblivion (137)**

### **/elements**

#### **2.1 Counter-revolution (146-178)**

**Let Them Eat Hot Dogs (147) • Concentrated Spectacles (159) • Royalty (169)**

#### **2.2 The Drug Narrative (179-212)**

**Privileged Intake (179) • Miraculation (190) • Narcosis (202)**

#### **2.3 Machinehood (213-245)**

**Robo-Picasso (213) • System Toxicity (221) • The World Text as ETC (234)**

#### **2.4 Meta-celebrity (246-280)**

**Celestuality (246) • Social Collage (257) • Andy Morningstar (270)**

### **/sources (281-294)**

**/theories**

## 1.1 Post-Warhol? Prolegomena to Any Future Aesthetics

When the glitter on your eyelids  
and your sequins start to tarnish  
when pancake fails to do the trick  
and the next resort is varnish—  
...that's stardusk

(Candy Darling, "Stardusk," in *My Face for the World to See*, 122)

### The Burden of Superficiality

In the event that any readers in the universe at large may wonder what would motivate a person who fancies himself a cultural critic and aesthete to produce a work proclaiming Andy Warhol the most philosophical artistic mind of the late twentieth century, I begin this project with a chapter making clear the trajectory it will take. With other books pronouncing the likes of Homer Simpson, Jerry Seinfeld and William Shakespeare philosophers, such an apology as mine might indeed be superfluous; still, I offer it in the spirit of benevolence.<sup>1</sup> Since Warhol is undoubtedly a philosopher of art and lifestyle, and since Arthur C. Danto is the one "real" philosopher to have identified him as "the nearest thing to a philosophical genius the history of art has produced," it is through the Danto portal that this work will first pass in its pursuit of a way of talking about Warhol as a philosophical

---

<sup>1</sup> See William Irwin's anthology *Seinfeld and Philosophy: A Book about Everything and Nothing* (Chicago: Open Court, 1999), as well as his *The Simpsons and Philosophy: The D'oh! of Homer* (Chicago: Open Court, 2001). See also Agnes Heller's *Time Is out of Joint: Shakespeare as Philosopher of History* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).

mind.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, since I find Danto only partially correct in his assessment of Warhol and his art, there is work for me to do in terms of transcending his system—a system indebted to that ultimate modern paradigm of organization, the mechanism of dialectic as elucidated by Hegel. Throughout his many aesthetic writings, Danto adheres to the claim that, in keeping with the Hegelian prediction for the path that Spirit, or *Geist*, must take in its metaphysical journey to self-consciousness, art comes to an end when its objects can be said to demonstrate a complete knowledge of the essence of art. After this point, art objects continue to be generated, without their being relevant to a historical present. Given that the goal of history is self-knowledge, anything demonstrating self-knowledge, including art, places itself outside history, effecting its own autolysis. Ultimately, art ends without the objects of the artworld being cognizant of that ending; blissfully unaware of their obviation, they continue to offer themselves for contemplation to a “world-mind” which has ceased finding them worthy of contemplation. The saga continues, but without purpose or gravity. “More” becomes “less.”

Going even further, Danto posits Warhol’s *Brillo Boxes* (1964) as the endpoint of art history. For Danto, these sculptural pieces solve the foundational crisis of modernism by dispensing with its foundational principles altogether (for example, they reject novelty and originality, while also collapsing the high/low, art/kitsch divide). This idea that Warhol’s *Brillo Boxes* bring art to its end is so seductive as to warrant further investigation on my part—especially given the influence it has had upon postmodern theory. My only substantive disagreement with Danto is that he can

---

<sup>2</sup> See Arthur Danto’s essay “Warhol” in the collection *Encounters and Reflections* (New York: Noonday Press, 1990) for his views on Warhol’s status as philosopher of art and as one in whom art realizes itself by way of philosophy (286-293).

never quite get beyond his very elegant Hegelian thesis, and that this obstruction prevents him from encountering the pleasures of the Warholian surface—pleasures which elude comprehensive philosophical schemas such as Hegel’s. Since I find that the pleasures of Warhol’s surfaces hinge upon the experience of aesthetic transport defined by sublimity, it will be my goal to synthesize Danto’s account of art-history’s coming to an end in a box of scouring pads with an account of Warholian sublimity submerged within Danto’s own aesthetics. Sublimity, and not the extrication of art from history, allows art to transcend the Brillo moment and to reach out to a future in which art will, of course, continue with force and vitality (or in which art’s lack of force and vitality will itself become forceful, important). Specifically, Warhol’s works embody, popularize and indeed inaugurate postmodern sublimity, a mode of transport indebted to the sublime of the Romantics yet distorted: stretched out, flattened, spread thin, Warhol’s sublime continues Romantic tradition by superficializing it. Beginning with Danto, I will thus pass from the debates surrounding Warhol’s terminal use of art to debates surrounding the postmodern sublimity of Warhol’s writings, sculptures, paintings and films, items representing the outer limits of Romantic practice for a decadent present.

Clearly, Warhol’s relevance for postmodern theory stems from his relevance for aesthetic theory and practice. This state of affairs is made all the more convoluted by my own views on postmodernism, which for me denotes that historical and cultural period in which, in reversal of the Kierkegaardian flow in *Either/Or*, aestheticism triumphs over ethics and religion.<sup>3</sup> This reversal transforms the world

---

<sup>3</sup> The thesis of postmodernism’s rampant aestheticism is also treated in Richard Shusterman’s *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992). For Shusterman, the

into one great reflecting/refracting surface in which all sorts of mismatched and incommensurable traces cavort in all the wrong contexts for all the wrong reasons—the kicker being that this incommensurability is itself historically important and demands tracking. As such, this notion of the aesthetic emerges as something more radical and problematic than the Surrealists ever envisioned when, via Breton, they championed Lautréamont’s example of an umbrella and a sewing machine making love on an operating table as a model for what new possibilities arise when objects of the lifeworld are removed from their boring, bourgeois contexts and recontextualized in the bold and uncanny new ones provided by the revolutionary aesthetic act.<sup>4</sup> Since I do view postmodernism as the triumph of the aesthetic over other competing “-ics” and “-isms,” it seems quite natural that the task of understanding postmodernism is best accomplished by studying the cultural *weltanschauung* it promulgates. And since I believe that the heart of that worldview lies fibrillant in the great bulk of Warhol’s works as an artist and entrepreneur, it seems inevitable that I should identify Warhol as the century’s art-philosophical enfant terrible, and that I should assess him as philosopher first through the lens afforded by Danto. Such a plan allows me both to use and go beyond Danto; that is, to identify the limits of his influential version of “art-historicity,” and then to move on to other Warholian perspectives which have nothing to do with Hegel or history. For Danto, Brillo must be gotten beyond, as in his title *Beyond the Brillo Box*; Brillo is a challenge, a road block, an aesthetic cul-de-sac. Warhol ushers in the postmodern era with its flagrant superficialities and wild

---

aestheticization of the ethical marks the contemporary epoch as postmodern. For example: the actions of the Beautiful People are taken to be ethically beautiful. Chapter 9, “Postmodern Ethics and the Art of Living,” is especially acute on this point (236-261).

<sup>4</sup> See Breton’s essay “Surrealist Situation of the Object” in his *Manifestoes of Surrealism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972, 275).

capitalist excesses, and hence it is Warhol to whom I look for my understanding of, to pervert a phrase of Rimbaud's, what it means for one to be *absolument postmoderne*. Moreover, if philosophy is first and foremost a way of life, as in the Socratic program elucidated by Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*, then it is Warhol's way of life which I will ultimately dissect, examining its rules in order to develop a theory of postmodern living. The joys of *schadenfreude*; the mania to document; the tensions between an impulse to accumulate and another to achieve maximum emptiness; the fan mentality; the cinematic attention to otherness: these among other aspects of the Warholian way are the outward signs of a coherent philosophy which this dissertation will unearth.

While Danto will argue repeatedly for a model of art history in which art can quite literally come to an end, I will begin this volume's undertaking by both admiring and challenging Danto's arguments in order to put forth an alternate narrative of the path that the visual arts, with painting in particular, have followed. And while Danto's begins with the discovery of linear perspective in the *Quattrocento* (in his lingo, art = representation) and ends in the apparent equation of objects of art with mere objects in Eleanor Ward's pioneering exhibition of Warhol's *Brillo Boxes* (art = philosophy of art), mine will enrich this account with the rediscovery of sublimity in the Romantic era and with the apparent equation of aesthetic objects and selves with *objets de kitsch* in Warhol's Factory. My response to Danto's proclamation of the end of art will be the counter-proclamation that, to pervert the Hegel of *Philosophy of Right*, it's not art that has painted its white on white, but Romanticism.<sup>5</sup> The post-Enlightenment world, which, if we believe

---

<sup>5</sup> In Hegel's schema, the task of philosophy is to comprehend and contemplate a world which has already come into maturity and is thus knowable. "When Philosophy paints its grey in grey, then has a

postmodern theorist Jean-François Lyotard, has witnessed and suffered the death of metanarratives and subjectivity, as well as, if we believe Hannah Arendt, the bankruptcy of revolutionary thinking, is certainly not in need of yet another proclamation of the death of *anything*, except perhaps the death of “the death of...”<sup>6</sup> However, as the crucial events that occurred in and around Warhol’s Factory and Andy Warhol Enterprises (and Studio 54, Xenon, Paradise Garage, and other mobile “offices”) revised Romanticism in such a way that many of the tenets central to it were rendered passé, it becomes necessary to trace the consequences of that revision. Turned into empty parodies of themselves, Romantic givens became mere decorative entities through Warhol’s scenes—this development contrasting sharply with the practical and revolutionary program that Romantic art had espoused from Shelley’s identification of poets as “unacknowledged legislators of the world” in *The Defense of Poetry* through Dadaism’s, Futurism’s, Situationism’s and Surrealism’s celebrations of Marxism and Fascism. Consequently, it seems apropos to absolve that world of yet another illusion (the revolutionary text), if only to replace it with a more

---

shape of life grown old. By philosophy’s grey in grey it cannot be rejuvenated but only understood. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dust” (13). See *Hegel’s Philosophy of Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

<sup>6</sup> From the perspective of systems theory, there is also the end of human subjectivity and its redescription in terms of brute objectivity. On this point, see the work of Niklas Luhmann as explicated by Jürgen Habermas in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Boston: MIT Press, 1990). The book’s twelfth lecture, *Excursus on Luhmann’s Appropriation of the Philosophy of the Subject through Systems Theory*, deals specifically with Luhmann’s relation to subjectivity: “The system-environment relationship takes the place of the inside-outside relationship between the knowing subject and the world as the totality of knowable objects. Knowledge of the world and of the self was the problem by reference to which the conscious accomplishments of the subject were judged. Now this problem is subordinated to that of the maintenance and expansion of systems” (369). The autopoietic theories of Maturana and Varela are also relevant to the radical objectification of the subjective, as is the work of Silvan Tomkins. See Maturana’s and Varela’s *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living* (Boston: D. Reidel, 1991) and *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995; ed. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank). Chapter 2.3, “Machinehood,” will examine some of these perspectives as they pertain to Warhol’s own identity as machine.

interesting one (the complicit text). My idea is that the Romantic notion of the sublime reaches its apex and terminus in Warhol, whose greatest contribution to the tradition of aesthetics has been not so much his ending of art but instead his invention of the postmodern or “POMO” sublime as the outpost and outer limit of sublimity. While I will not include an exhaustive discussion of the entire history of the sublime from Longinus through Burke and Kant, I will explain what I feel the British and German Romantics meant by sublimity and what Warhol did to carry that concept to its most ludicrous end without lapsing into an anti- or counter-sublime. Taming the sublime, framing it, perhaps even recasting it as mere picturesqueness, Warhol refuses the revolutionary impulse, making the troublesome decision to wed art to business rather than leave the two realms in opposition. “Complicit” in the Marxist sense, and fully enjoying his false consciousness, Warhol partakes of a radical act of *embourgeoisment* which turns even drug addicts and drag queens into objects of bourgeois contemplation and consumption—a state of affairs made abundantly clear when, after his being shot by Valerie Solanas in 1968, Warhol began to phase out the weirdos of his earlier career (Ondine, Mary Woronov, Gerard Malanga) and to phase in more respectable associates (Paul Morrissey, Fred Hughes, Pat Hackett). Stephen Koch’s *Stargazer: The Life, World and Films of Andy Warhol* relays the feelings of anger and disgust resulting from the purge: “‘Warhol had been told,’ Ondine says, ‘that commercialism means you can’t bother with the freaks anymore. You have tintypes. Whatever sound somebody did originally, well—you can duplicate it.’” (14). Always risking inauthenticity, Warhol makes even sublime personalities, like the brilliant crackpots of the Old Factory, discardable.

Whether or not either “the sublime” or its postmodern variant exists anywhere in the world of shared experience will, of course, be left up to the reader. The truth of the matter is that I myself vacillate between the two antithetical responses of averring that, yes, Campbell’s Soup and Edie Sedgwick are sublime, and, no, how could anything so trivial as canned tomato pulp and an Underground starlet junkie ever be anything other than trivial? The pomo sublime is a tricky business; volatile, unstable, shaky, it vanishes as quickly as it appears. The idea that the ordinary is the extraordinary, that the nondescript conceals the wondrous at its core, has long been a staple of Roman Catholic doctrine; since I see Warhol’s work as profoundly Catholic, I don’t find it at all accidental that it begs the question of whether or not the ordinary and the banal are indeed the extraordinary and the supernatural, of whether or not the saint is the sinner and the meek really will inherit the earth.<sup>7</sup> Thus while Danto proclaims Andy Warhol’s Brillo Box as the world’s last *objet* (as opposed to, for example, the Del Monte, Heinz, Mott’s or Campbell’s boxes, all of which were part of the 1964 “Box” series, or Warhol’s 1971 *Kellogg’s Corn Flakes* boxes, each which, theoretically, might have ended art, but didn’t), I have taken the alternative tack of proclaiming that Andy Warhol’s ability to transfigure commonplace commodities and people into works of art opens art in general to the sublimities of kitsch. In my estimation, Warhol either brings the project of Romanticism to completion, or else purges it of spent metaphysical underpinnings so that the postmodern individual might experience it in its most up-to-date, some might argue

---

<sup>7</sup> Camille Paglia’s *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991) and Jane Daggett Dillenberger’s article “Jesus as Pop Icon” (*Bible Review*: October 1996, 22-54) and subsequent book *The Religious Art of Andy Warhol* (New York: Continuum, 1998) provide examples of Warhol’s Catholicism and the role it played in his art and personality.

most worthless, form. Deciding between these two options is difficult for me, which means that I affirm them both, and admit that, depending on how one sees it, Warhol either ends or begins anew Romanticism—perhaps marking its grand demise through a demonstration of its impossibility (for example, his externalization of inspiration), perhaps reformulating it for an audience which has come to accept the existential and ergonomic implications of globalization (for example, his pervasive technophilia).<sup>8</sup> Postmodernism thrives on this oscillation. Its ambivalence with respect to the fate of aesthetic transport makes postmodernism postmodern and imbues the paintings, words, sculptures and spectacles of Warhol's career with deep significance. Posing the problem of superficiality in its most acute and urgent form, Warhol's products challenge Coleridgian organicism and Wordsworthian imaginationism, making it clear that the postmodern art object need not burden itself with originality, novelty or the exigencies of inspiration—that, like other products of the capitalist culturescape, it too might persist as dispensable kitsch, trash or fluff.

Yet superficiality does not necessarily imply or entail weightlessness. Like any other compulsion, the desire to recast the world in the thinnest terms imaginable carries with it a burdensomeness both exhausting (it empties) and exhaustive (it makes demands). Consuming Warhol is an impossibility. There is always more

---

<sup>8</sup> Regarding Warhol's externalization of inspiration, see quotes such as *POPism's* "I was never embarrassed about asking someone, literally, 'What should I paint?' because Pop comes from the outside, and how is asking someone for any ideas any different from looking for them in a magazine?" (New York: Harvest, 1980, 16). In *The Life and Death of Andy Warhol*, Victor Bockris relates a relevant story in which Warhol pumps gallery-owner Muriel Latow for ideas: "I don't know what to do! Muriel, you've got fabulous ideas. Can't you give me an idea?" Yes, she could, Muriel replied, but it would cost Andy some money. 'How much?' he asked. 'Fifty dollars,' she answered. Andy promptly wrote out a check and said, 'Okay, go ahead. Give me a fabulous idea!' 'What do you like most in the whole world?' Muriel asked. 'I don't know. What do I like most in the whole world?' 'Money,' she replied. 'You should paint pictures of money.' 'Oh, gee,' Andy gasped, 'that really is a great idea!' In the silence that followed, Muriel elaborated. 'You should paint something that everybody sees every day, that everybody recognizes...like a can of soup.' (104-105). See *The Life and Death of Andy Warhol* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989).

Andy. Reading each page of *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, for example, can knock anyone out, even the most ardent Warhol fan—so too can sitting through each frame of *Empire*, or even *The Chelsea Girls*. When raised to the level of an imperative, superficiality takes a toll not unlike that of any other ideological impulse. One way to recast the Warholian project in the language of the interrogative is to assert that he strives to supply answers to the question: “What can I produce that will further thin out the world?” Answers would include the likes of defunct Marilyn (*Gold Marilyn Monroe*, 1962), gaudy flora (*Flowers*, 1967), a cinema of no cinema (*Lonesome Cowboys*, 1967), a “downtown” public-access TV show (*Andy Warhol’s TV*, 1982)—yet they would also include the even more troublesome Knives (1981-1982), Endangered Species (1983) and Mercedes-Benz motorcycles and sports cars (1986) which closed out his career.<sup>9</sup> For Warhol’s supreme danger is that his superficiality will deteriorate from being an ironic superficiality obsessed with depth to a genuine superficiality obsessed with superficiality, therein losing its fundamental relationship to depth (hence the old guard’s criticism of the post-1968 New Factory as inauthentic). There is thus a qualitative difference between even a Studio 54-era Celebrity Portrait, which can be read equally as celebration and indictment (hence one suggested exhibition title, *Social Disease*), and his 1985 Reigning Queens pieces, which are too much of an endorsement of monarchic splendor ever to be read as anything but socially vapid—just as there is a qualitative difference between any

---

<sup>9</sup> Regarding Warhol’s late insipidness, I follow Wayne Koestenbaum in *Andy Warhol* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2001) by examining diary responses to the Reigning Queens show: “And I’ve hit rock bottom. This show, I have sunk to the bottom of the gutter. The rock bottom of the skids of the end of the line. It was like having an opening in somebody’s rent-controlled apartment” (Monday, June 3, 1985). On Friday, September 20, 1985, Warhol also comments: “I had my opening at Leo Castelli’s to go to, of the Reigning Queens portfolio that I just hate George Mulder for showing here in America. They were supposed to be only for Europe—nobody here cares about royalty and it’ll just be another bad review.”

Celebrity Portrait (say, *Grace Jones*, 1986) and any early Marilyn (say, *Marilyn Six-Pack*, 1962), the former representing the move to reject depth altogether, the latter representing a consciousness that the deep and the superficial denote competing strata.<sup>10</sup> What I wish to put forth is the notion that these later vapid and vacant works are themselves seminal to Warhol's project and not proof that Warhol had ever lost his aesthetic mojo, or that, in Wayne Koestenbaum's words in *Andy Warhol*, Warhol himself had become an endangered species. Self-consciously superficial in the absence of any critique of depth, they prefigure the total depthlessness of high postmodernism by achieving total oblivion with respect to the superficiality/depth gradient.<sup>11</sup> As David Bourdon comments in reference to the more superficial works of the late Warhol, Warhol's public "was skeptical about much of the work he created in the 1970s and 1980s because it was so blatantly commercial. Like a true post-modernist, he gave equal weight to advertising images as to those from art history. He went so far as to claim to buy magazines for their ads and to prefer television commercials to the program being shown. Warhol viewed advertising as an artistic expression of his times; he watched it in much the same way as he went to museums" (*Warhol*, 394). Yet what works such as the Celebrity Portraits or Mercedes-Benz series ultimately offer is more than a glance at the aesthetic importance of

---

<sup>10</sup> In David Bourdon's words: "During the early 1970s, against a turbulent political backdrop that included the fiasco of American involvement in the Vietnam war and the downfall of President Nixon's presidency in the Watergate scandal, a "me" generation sprang to prominence—and Warhol was there to hold up its mirror... They cared passionately about their appearance, health, life-style, and bank accounts. Andy catered to their self-centeredness and inflated pride by offering his services as a portraitist" (324). See his *Warhol* (New York: Abradale Press, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> As Koestenbaum further comments in *Andy Warhol*, "Few critics have paid attention to his Endangered Species series—deeming it Warhol at his most bathetic—but, on the contrary, it gravely portrays his own bodily and emotional endangerment, as well as a sexual minority's panic in the face of epidemic" (196). Endangered as an artist, Warhol feels abjected by the lack of critical attention to his work in the 80s, perhaps envisioning himself as an environmental casualty or creature on the verge of permanent disappearance.

advertising.<sup>12</sup> They tantalize with the promise of amnesia, with the forgetting that there is, indeed, any difference between superficiality and depth. Fulfilling earlier promises to reduce all art and aesthetic experience to the level of surface, they grant access to a world in which postmodernism will fully come into its own and in which post-history will eradicate any traces of nostalgia, historical or other. Along the way, we will also see Warhol's own movement from hesitant modern to flagrant postmodern. By the end of the Warhol 80s, all is surface. Vestiges of modernism boil away with leftover soup. Art becomes the paratactic enterprise of shopping: "Diana Ross came at 3:00 and she loved all the portraits, she said, "Wrap them up," and they all fit in the limousine, and she had a check at Bob's place by 5:00. And she wants me to do the cover for her next album" (*Diaries*, Friday, October 2, 1981). The Steinian "no there there" principle no longer makes sense in the absence of a concept of plenitude. What results is a strange species of solidity. Images acquire mass, and the present moment completely colonizes the whole of one's internal time consciousness (in fact, as further chapters will demonstrate, what is produced is an *external* time consciousness).

---

<sup>12</sup> In fact, the pieces in the Mercedes-Benz series are literally advertisements, as are a 1984 *Perrier* silkscreen and a 1985 rendition of dehydrated Campbell's Soup mix (*Campbell's Soup Mix*). Canvases such as these represent a further development of Warhol's "business art." As Warhol states in his *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)*, business art is the only art which can support itself; supporting Warhol, these advertisements and art objects differ from other Warhol paintings in that they generate advertising money. See *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1975).

## Why Warhol?

If, indeed, the overarching strategy of modernism has been negation, as Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer have advocated in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, as Adorno has argued in *Negative Dialectics*, and as the Hegelian concept of history and Marxist concept of revolution have made abundantly clear, then the question most in need of asking is what Warhol does with the project of negation begun in the European Enlightenment and climaxing in the innovativeness of painters like Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline and Willem de Kooning, or poets like Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams and Gertrude Stein.<sup>13</sup> Putting forth an aesthetics and poetics of radical *affirmation* of the sort lamented by high-minded thinkers like Arthur Danto, for whom art ends when pluralism, always an affirmative project, begins, Warhol represents a decisive break with modernism. Culturally, he embodies the moment at which modernism is obviated in favor of “something else.” This *je ne sais quoi* or aesthetic *x* is whatever one denotes by the elusive cultural marker “postmodernism.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, whether Warholian affirmation is indeed a rupture within modernism or, to be perverse, is in fact the moment at which Enlightenment rationality follows Adorno’s advice and, in a spasm of negative

---

<sup>13</sup> While I am here referring to “negation” as a logical-philosophical enterprise, the emotive valence of contempt as this informs the practice of nihilism is also pertinent to my argument. See, for example Hannah Arendt’s discussion of the love of the fin-de-siècle elite for the contemptuous mob in her *Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harcourt, 1976). See also Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness* as well as his *Nausea* for other descriptions of the lived experience of negation. Overall, the winner of the negation contest is none other than Hegel’s idea of “infinite absolute negativity.” This concept takes the cake. It presents negativity at its most negative, therein best representing modernity’s debt to the work of negation.

<sup>14</sup> An exception to the rule that pluralism entail a necessary affirmativity would be Judith Butler’s *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993), in which Butler puts forth the notion that pluralism implies an increase in repudiation and hence negation (as subject positions increase in number, so too do the constitutive repudiations of those subject positions). See “Phantasmic Identification and the Assumption of Sex” (114-115).

dialecticality, turns back upon itself in a moment of maximal modernism, is also worth consideration. For, if it is to Warhol's credit that he negates negation or sublates sublation, then perhaps it is he who, via his engagement of Hollywood, the grocery store and other American popular cultures, completes the hitherto unfinished project of modernism in a way that other Pop contemporaries, who did not immerse themselves in the diurnal with such gusto and glee, could not.<sup>15</sup> For example, Edward Ruscha, Jasper Johns, James Rosenquist and Roy Lichtenstein toy with the Pop experience without totally losing themselves in it; their modernity survives intact, uncontaminated by contact with trash cultures. Warhol's does not, and this factor marks him as qualitatively different from his colleagues.<sup>16</sup> Warhol's alleged wishy-washiness, his embracing of so many attitudes and phenomena, even his "swishiness," are at stake here. Rejecting the principle of exclusivity inherent in the project of negation (in other words, the idea that Projectivism is incompatible with egotism, or that abstraction is incompatible with figuration), Warhol troubles aesthetics by his willingness to admit almost anything into the artworld. As such, his pluralism is the hallmark of a new art-historical era, one verging dangerously on a populism or democracy which transcends the bounds of decorum set forth by even

---

<sup>15</sup> Throughout this writing, I use "sublation" or the more ominous *Aufhebung* to describe the process by which, in Hegelian dialectics, antithesis negates and preserves thesis in the act of synthesis. My interest in sublation is its radical ambivalence—i.e. that it retains what it destroys. A scandalous example might be Jane's preservation and destruction of Blanche in camp classic *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?*, since it is the suspended motility and animation of Blanche which, at least for me, reveals the pleasurable core of the sublative act. Another example might be the medical process of inoculation, as this involves the preservation of a pathogen for the sole purpose of rendering it impotent.

<sup>16</sup> Rosenquist's Screen Test (currently on Reel 2) is especially comical. Entering Warhol's inverted cinematic world for a moment, he is noticeably uncomfortable at being the film's subject (he pulls at his tight shirt collar, squirms). I mention Rosenquist's discomfort only to support my claim that Warhol's Pop contemporaries remain outside the popular cultures which absorb him.

pragmatist pioneer John Dewey, for whom the élitism of aesthetic experience must be defused in order to resomatize art.<sup>17</sup>

In examining why my version of postmodernism is centered on the Andy Warhol experience as opposed to other products, people or worlds potentially filling that void—following Jean Baudrillard, I could have decided to write a book about Disney; following Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, I could have identified Las Vegas as the culprit; other transitional figures could have included humble characters like Quentin Crisp or larger-than-life characters like Stephen Hawking, as well as culture industries like MTV or the Internet—I will in this and the ensuing chapters of my dissertation examine the various themes which have marked Warholian postmodernism as fascinating, troubling, and *de trop*. In exploring and luxuriating within the space of Warhol's Imaginary, I will pay attention not only to the sublime, the beautiful, the picturesque, the grotesque and other aesthetic categories central to the foundation of aesthetics as an 18<sup>th</sup>-century philosophical enterprise, but also to Warhol's own uses and theory of the abject. For Warhol, the abject is most certainly what Julia Kristeva in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* has identified as being the lining of the sublime and what Marcel Proust in *Remembrance of Things Past* has revealed to be a pulsation readily reversing itself such that the sublime is produced from the slime of abjecthood.<sup>18</sup> Engaging abjection

---

<sup>17</sup> In the essay "The Live Creature" in *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigree Books, 1980), Dewey formulates the continuousness of aesthetic with non-aesthetic experience as such: "A primary task is thus imposed upon one who undertakes to write upon the philosophy of the fine arts. This task is to restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doings, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience" (3).

<sup>18</sup> A supreme example would be Odette de Crécy's meteoric rise to Odette Swann and, at the end of *Remembrance of Things Past* (New York: Vintage Books, 1982), mother of the Duchesse de Guermantes. For a closer look at how abjection plays itself out in Proust, see my "Post-Proustian Glamour" in *Rhizomes 5: Objects and Their Subjects* (Fall 2002).

as perhaps the most “absolute” of Warhol’s many zeroes, I will examine and cross-examine his Others. Racially, sexually and ontologically volatile, the bodies filmed, documented, painted and written about by Warhol dramatize many of the problems inherent in spectacle and the constitution of the anthropological object. Since I have chosen as my version of postmodernism one caught up with questions of the abject, I will study stars like Donyale Luna, Ondine, Edie Sedgwick, and Ultra Violet both for the pleasures they afford and the problems their capture presents—hence the rejected, the ostracized and the expatriated will be central to my project, which takes the abject as its agitator and star. Drawing on the Kristevan idea that it is precisely the prospect of abjection which secures the process of subject-fabrication or *assujettissement*, I will look to Warhol’s uses of the abject, as well as his own particular abjections (for example, what it meant for one to be “out,” or literally déclassé, as so many Superstars invariably found themselves, as well as his use of bodily waste in his 1978 Oxidation Paintings).<sup>19</sup>

That the abject can itself generate a potent species of glamour is Warhol’s legacy for celebrity theory. It certainly merits serious scrutiny in a project such as mine, in which the supplementariness of kitsch in the spheres of art and selfhood follows the mischievous program of striking back: afterthought to art, kitsch resurges. ““Oh look, who’s that? Is that someone we know?” A four-foot-two old lady was crossing Park Avenue at 65<sup>th</sup> Street. She had frizzy red hair and was wearing black

---

<sup>19</sup> One example of Warhol’s own abjection of various members of his clique would be his use of Ingrid Superstar to “get back at” Edie. In *Swimming Underground: My Years in the Warhol Factory* (Boston: Journey Editions, 1995), Mary Woronov provides an account of the situation as follows: “Everyone loved Ingrid. But I didn’t. I hated her. She was so eager to act stupid, like it was her job; actually, she was Andy’s invention to get back at Edie. Both girls had the same thin body with short dyed-blond hair and big earrings, but Ingrid was Edie’s opposite: ugly, low class and stupid. It was as if Edie was Dorian Gray, and Ingrid was her portrait. After Edie’s banishment, for reasons that I never understood, Ingrid remained as a sad reminder of who wins the game” (32-33).

gloves, a pink sweater, a black dress, red shoes, and she was carrying a red bag. She was hunchbacked. I don't know why, but she seemed like someone we would know" (*Philosophy*, 230). As this quote demonstrates, the physically deformed frizzball is recast as beautiful person, her mismatched red/pink ensemble elevating her to the status of Warhol intimate: she is one of Warhol's family of freaks. Warhol's *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol* bases its theory of glamour on the abject, mining the field of radical otherness for candidates of styleworthiness. The other certainly possesses its uses. Beyond *Philosophy*, Warhol focuses on the othered body, be it the obese body (Brigid Polk, Pat Ast), the transvestite body (Mario Montez, Candy Darling, Holly Woodlawn, Jackie Curtis, Ming Vauze), the hustler body (Paul America in 1965's *My Hustler*, Joe Dallesandro in 1968's *Flesh*) or the body of the black queen (Dorothy Dean, Donyale Luna, or those depicted in the 1975 *Ladies and Gentlemen* series). He is not always kind: "Paige stayed overnight with Jean Michel in his dirty smelly loft downtown. How I know it smells is because Chris was there and said (*laughs*) it was like a nigger's loft, that there were crumpled-up hundred-dollar bills in the corner and bad b.o. all over and you step on paintings" (*Diaries*, Tuesday, August 9, 1983). Still, casting its gaze toward those bodies excluded from more mainstream notions of glamour, Warhol's eye selects the quirky, the disfigured, the congenitally odd, the racially minoritized, as being more visually (or, as in the Basquiat passage, olfactorily) interesting than the gorgeous, the flawless, the "all-American." A new species of fashion creature is born.

Choosing Warhol, I will perhaps be asked why I have elected to credit him with what must appear to be superhuman qualities, why I have placed him at the

modernity/postmodernity crossroads, and have not focused on more reputable culture giants like Philip Glass, John Cage, or, the obvious choice, Marcel Duchamp.

Instead, I have chosen Warhol as my heuristic device, my fictive center, my authorial function (*pace* Foucault, yet another  $f(a)$ ), both for his own philosophies and for the philosophizing his work invites. In the spirit of Wilde's *Decay of Lying*, Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, or Henry Louis Gates' *The Signifying Monkey*, Warhol is the ultimate dissimulator and trickster. Can we believe him? Can we take him seriously? How are we to class his speech acts? There is no consensus on Warhol's respectability. We may read him as a concrete example of what high theory (Derrida or Lacan, for example) has posited as the death of the subject or the absence of a center, while it is equally probable that we see him as no more than a scam artist, media whore and exploiter of the talents of others (hence my use of the term "pimp"). He is an everything and a nothing, a genius and an idiot, a globetrotter and a loser. For while Duchamp, the other art star to beg the question of an after-modernity, may profess the definitive unfinishedness of his works of art, these works have still managed to achieve a respectability which has cemented their place in modernism. Warhol, however, though foundational to postmodernism, has never achieved the respectability of Duchamp. There is always the sense that he is playing a shell game, that the check might bounce, that his art is worthless. For example, even Warhol's fans and portrait-sitters are unclear on the value of his work. When a portrait of Laura de Coppet is cut into strips by a lover, she expects to be given a freebie: "And Leo called and said that the portrait of Laura really was destroyed, and I just don't know what to say to that. I'm not going to give them a free replacement. If they

want another one they'll have to pay for it. It's not my problem. It's their problem" (*Diaries*, Monday, December 7, 1981). Though undeniably important, Warhol does not command the respect or authority of a Jasper Johns or Roy Lichtenstein: mercifully so. His lack of authority, his swishiness, his flimsiness—alluring qualities to me—constitute my *foci*.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that I plan to execute a serious account of Warhol's frivolity constitutes my own assault on taste. In doing so, I have chosen to replicate the interpretive quagmire that has been Warhol's enviable plight. The lessons I have learned from Warhol are that banality itself must not be made light of, and that it is the thinness of the superficial which, when critically engaged, or even non-critically engaged and merely enjoyed, can open up a profound abyss of meaning. "Excess of meaning produces slippage in the sign," as the poststructural truism goes.<sup>21</sup> When art becomes advertising and entertainment—"Business is the new art" would be the famous Warholian formulation—the implications for both producers and consumers of culture are quite grave indeed, and call forth new models and metaphors for cultural production (one example: the "avant-garde" model so important to movements like Futurism and Surrealism or even Vorticism no longer applies—as a military metaphor, it is no longer "live"). Hence photographer Cindy Sherman and painter Julian Schnabel have become filmmakers, while painter Mark Kostabi puts in appearances on talk shows and public access TV and conceptualist Adrian Piper

---

<sup>20</sup> In Avital Ronell's lexicon, Warhol is "stupid." See her *Stupidity* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001) for ways of reading the naïveté and vapidness of Warhol. It is his oscillation between the poles of fool and philosopher which makes Warhol a particularly hot topic.

<sup>21</sup> Such is Geoff Ward's phrasing in *Statutes of Liberty: The NY School of Poets* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993). His point is that the love of figuration of the NY School poets produces semantic destabilization. I wish to extend this principle to the Pop aesthetic, which uses repetition and exaggeration to set the sign in motion. Hence superficiality has its own logic of sabotage.

distributes disturbing business cards to addled MTA passengers.<sup>22</sup> Clearly, artists have, in the language of *POPism*, “gone horizontal,” embodying a range of subject positions and personae referencing that of “hyphenated” figures like Arthur Cravan (poet-pugilist) or Marcel Duchamp (drag queen-sculptor), yet going beyond them in terms of the sincerity with which they are offered. In the wake of what has been heralded by postmodern theory as the death of the avant-garde, the role of the cultural producer becomes muddied.<sup>23</sup> If the artist is no longer at the forefront of culture, then where does this creature belong? Since the existential consequences of the famous reconciliation of “art” and “life” effected by postmodernism are best illustrated by Warhol’s rampant commodity fetishism, I must examine him and not, for example, those postmodernists for whom the everyday retains its loathsomeness (one gets the sense that Baudrillard finds everyday life in California vile beyond compare).

Why such a book should be written under the auspices and sign of the American English Department when it so clearly indebted to the methodologies and spirit of philosophy and the social sciences will also be addressed as this piece of writing develops. Where does a book such as this belong? English? Continental Philosophy? Art history? Area Studies? If so, then which Area? Media Studies? LGBTQ Studies? Drawing on the history of Aesthetics as a discipline, I will also in the writing of this book hint at what I feel should be the academic and cultural

---

<sup>22</sup> See Cindy Sherman’s *Cindy Sherman: Film Stills* (New York: MOMA, 2003), Julian Schnabel’s *Julian Schnabel* (New York: Henry N. Abrams, 2003), Maurice Berger’s *Adrian Piper a Retrospective* (Baltimore: University of Maryland, 2000), and Mark Kostabi’s *Kostabi: The Early Years* (New York: Kostabi World, 1990).

<sup>23</sup> For a closer look at the theoretical axes of the avant-garde, see Peter Bürger’s *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1984). His distinction between modernism and avant-gardism politicizes art, allying the radical aesthetic act to social intervention and cementing the Romantic alliance between art and social praxis. De-politicized and “dumb,” postmodernism neutralizes avant-gardism by making intervention unfashionable and rechanneling its energies toward the endless work of consumption.

positioning of it. For me, the point is to produce *homeless discourses*: in other words, ideas that belong nowhere. Intellectual homelessness is crucial to my enterprise, and it is precisely the intertextuality of a project such as this which renders it useless in the most Wildean and Nietzschean ways. The great tradition of homeless discourses—here I have in mind maverick writing like Michele Wallace’s *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*, Michel de Certeau’s *Practice of Everyday Life*, Søren Kierkegaard’s *Either/Or*, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s *Epistemology of the Closet*, Meena Alexander’s *Fault Lines*, and Wayne Koestenbaum’s *Jackie Under My Skin*, among others—constitutes a productive academic crisis allowing the university to continue reinventing itself for a contemporary populace; I hope to be a part of that reformulation through the production of my empirical, lyrical meditation on Warhol.

Arguably, this is a literary project, since (a) it takes as its problem Warhol’s own irrepressible textuality (books such as *a, a novel*, *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol: from A to B and Back Again*, *Andy Warhol’s Party Book*, the *Diaries*), and (b) it articulates a critique of Romantic and modern poetics, philosophies and attitudes. Arguably, it is also a poststructural project, since it takes the concept of textuality put forth by semioticians like Roland Barthes at its word. A book such as this is infected by what Immanuel Kant in his *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* refers to as *misology*:

And, in fact, we find that the more a cultivated reason deliberately devotes itself to the enjoyment of life and happiness, the more the man falls short of true contentment. From this fact there arises in many persons, if only they are candid enough to admit it, a certain degree of misology, hatred of reason. This is particularly the case with those who are most

experienced in its use. After counting all the advantages which they draw—I will not say from the invention of the arts of common luxury—from the sciences (which in the end seem to them to be also a luxury of the understanding), they nevertheless find they have brought more trouble on their shoulders instead of gaining in happiness; they finally envy, rather than despise, the common run of men who are better guided by merely natural instinct and who do not permit their reason much influence on their conduct (12).

Leaving behind reason, and, in many ways, courting death (a literary thanatos), this project remixes disciplines, risks category errors, and flaunts unholy stylistic alliances. Fusing and cruising literary and cultural theories, phenomenology, psychoanalysis, physics and trash culture, it partakes of a play rooted in misogyny (that is, a disruptive play flirting with the irrational). Loving logic at the same time as it considers alternate rationalities as well as alternatives to rationality, this book represents the very mentality which, according to Kant, brings happiness to one seeking solace from the coldness of reason. The ineradicability of Warhol's own misogynistic stance (this in light of my claims of philosophical status for him—Warhol, the idiot-philosopher, Wordsworth's "Idiot Boy") will consequently inflect the unfolding of my own ideas. Love of the inane is essential to my postmodernism; such my text's most irreducible postulate, and such is the one principle I will use to demarcate Warhol's POMO-ism from others. For while competing postmodernisms, such as filmmaker David Lynch's, manipulate the inane, only Warhol's risks becoming inane itself. This stupidity cannot be wished away, and can only be entered.

## Kant after Duchamp, Hegel after Warhol? <sup>24</sup>

I have decided to divide the book into two parts, one focused on questions of Warhol's work vis-à-vis aesthetic theory, the other dedicated to plunging into "atomic Warhol" (in other words, those irreplaceable ingredients without which there would be no Warhol). As this chapter makes clear, I am entering the zone delimited by Warhol's products only to exit it, using them to launch off into the atmosphere of theory, then crashing back down to Warholian materialities with a thud. In other words, since I have begun this volume with a prolegomena to future aesthetic activity, it has become evident that the best way to go "post-Warhol" is to engage his work and personality at the dual levels of ideology and thingness. The theoretical journey I have planned begins with the present chapter, in which many of the essential theses of my dissertation are adumbrated, then proceeds with a chapter on plastic inevitability (**Chapter 1.2**), another on what I call "The POMO Tingle" (**Chapter 1.3**) and a fourth on Warhol's status vis-à-vis the Romanticisms of Friedrich Schlegel, Hegel and their Idealist milieu (an Idealism imported into the Anglophone world via Coleridge; **Chapter 1.4**). Following this cluster, a second follows; this, the thingness portion of my dissertation, takes aim at the Warholian quiddity through an examination of what I identify as the four most important and ineradicable aspects of Warhol's aesthetic: counter-revolution (**Chapter 2.1**), the drug narrative (**Chapter 2.2**), machinehood (**Chapter 2.3**) and meta-celebrity (**Chapter 2.4**). Dividing its

---

<sup>24</sup> Here, the reference is to Thierry de Duve's masterful *Kant after Duchamp* (Boston: MIT Press, 1996). Extending the Kant/Duchamp quotient further, I posit a Hegel/Warhol ratio in order to extend Danto's analysis while attuning myself to the impact of Warhol's art on Hegelian doctrines of historical necessity.

time between theories and elements, this project thus looks at Warhol both as ideologue and bachelor machine—i.e., as one whose commodities include both a world-view and a collection of tangible objects. While of course an ideology itself possesses a kind of thingness or even objecthood, I have made the invidious distinction between thoughts and things in order to justify the fact that one cluster of chapters pays greater attention to “-isms” like postmodernism and Romanticism while the second preoccupies itself primarily with the material conditions of Warhol’s worlds (a poeticized new historicism). There will necessarily be overlap between these clusters, as when, in a chapter devoted to the meaning of drug use in Warhol’s art, film-making and writing, time is devoted to Deleuze’s and Guattari’s theory of the Body Without Organs (*le corps sans organs*, or CSO) as set forth in *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, or when, in a chapter which claims to set out to analyze the postmodern sublime, more than ample time is set aside for a close reading of an illuminating passage from Warhol’s *Philosophy*.

In exfoliating the many layers of Warhol’s aesthetics, I have opted for an international junket. My plan is to use the ideas of Arthur Danto to put forth a theory of art, revolution and sublimity, then to pass from sublimity à la Danto to sublimity à la Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant. The aesthetic theories of Burke and Kant will next give way to those of German Idealism proper, as the work of Friedrich Schlegel and Georg Hegel best describe the Romanticism of the Warholian project two centuries later. Since Danto’s definitions of art and revolution depend heavily upon a Hegelian notion of world-historicity in which an entity’s having come to know its essence entirely ends its performance on the world stage, my approach necessarily

involves taking a careful look at the ways in which the revolutionariness of art causes it to reassert itself as philosophy and, inadvertently, to obviate its need for material existence (after the revolution, there is no longer a historical present).<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, if, as Thièrry de Duve has argued, the works of Marcel Duchamp necessitate a revaluation of the aesthetic principles integral to Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, then I postulate that the works of Warhol necessitate a comparable revaluation of the aesthetic principles central to Hegel's *Aesthetics* (and, on a side note, a revaluation of his idea of world-historicity as formulated in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*). Using Danto to pass to Hegel to pass to Warhol will allow me to make a case for the terminal revolutionariness of Warhol. Bringing to a close a pure art separated from an impure kitsch by an impassable ontological, economic and social gulf, Warhol leads the revolution to end all revolutions. When art and life reintegrate, the need for revolution vanishes. Alienation gives way to commodity rapture, and a bloodthirsty avant-garde bent on tearing up the world becomes a complacent bourgeoisie interested primarily in bloodlessly consuming it.

My focus on Danto's ideas in this and the ensuing chapters of this book is therefore multifaceted. My reading of Danto's philosophy is respectful yet subversive, for rather than extract from it the standard version of an art history which begins with representation, "middles" with expression and ends with philosophy, and which has influenced the history of postmodernism as a discourse in a truly foundational fashion, I use it to abstract a theory of the sublime unanticipated by even

---

<sup>25</sup> Technically, art morphs into religion, and religion morphs into philosophy in the Hegelian system. The point Hegel makes in the *Introductory Lectures* to his *Aesthetics* (New York: Penguin, 1994) is that "art" as "philosophy of art" constitutes the final phase of art's world-historicity. After this point, art gives way to religion as *Geist's* medium. See 1.4 for a more thorough exposition of the Hegelian mechanism.

Danto himself (this by reading Danto against Danto—the orthodox theoretical method).<sup>26</sup> In Fredric Jameson’s estimation, postmodernism proper is marked by the defining characteristics of (1) depthlessness, (2) loss of historicity, (3) a resurgence of the discourse of sublimity, and (4) new technological structuration; such are the rudiments of postmodern theory as laid out in his influential *Postmodernism: Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (6). Not rudimentary to postmodern theory, however, comes the observation that Warhol’s is an art shot through with questions of sublimity (its indebtedness to depthlessness, historical diffidence and mechanization pose less complicated yet still worthy questions which themselves inform the sublimity issue). Deploying Danto’s ideas in the service of the sublime is a tricky business: their manifest content has little to do with any sense that the Warholian surface might effect the kind of transport identified by Burke, Kant or other theorists of the sublime moment. Read latently, however, Danto’s speculations are rife with intimations that, for Warhol, questions of such transport are paramount—that the aesthetic experience as produced by Warhol engages the discourse of sublimity in a multiplicity of modalities. In keeping with Jameson’s third postmodern pillar, they bring to the forefront the discourse of sublimity—work which artists in and after Warhol continue. Too much of an analytic philosopher to give credence to any such emotive frippery as “terror” (Burke, John Dennis), “attraction/repulsion” (Burke), or “the sacrifice of the Imagination” (Kant), Danto professes nothing about Warhol’s connections to the experience of sublimity, while at the same time Danto’s ideas

---

<sup>26</sup> As Michel de Certeau notes in his chapter “The Arts of Theory” in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California, 1988): “Cut-out and turn over” is the basic recipe for theory as it has been practiced since Foucault: “First an ‘ethnological’ isolation, then a logical inversion” (62). I am thus subjecting Danto to what I would call Flapjack Theory.

betray a consciousness that the profound immanence of Pop Art in its Warholian incarnation reveals a postmodern variant of sublimity (a sort of sublimity-after-sublimity).

The theoretical work undertaken in the first half of this dissertation is balanced by the more “textual” work undertaken in the remaining two-thirds. Why art should have ever come to denote an activity which might revolutionize life is a question begging genealogical treatment of the sort popularized by Michel Foucault and his closest methodological protégée, Judith Butler: what is the particular history of the idea that art should pose a revolutionary challenge to any imposable world order? Although the notion of an art at war with the status quo is not particularly surprising or earth-shattering to a world steeped in Romantic ideology, what is perhaps shocking and world-rending is the idea that Revolution itself should conceptually wither, going the way of other fads and impulse items. While Warhol does play with Communist imagery, as in his 1973 *Mao* series, his 1976 *Still Life (Hammer and Sickle)* series or in his sketches of Communist orators featured at Los Angeles’ 2002 MOCA retrospective, his love of money prevents any deeper engagement of revolutionary rhetoric from occurring. As the entries in his *Diaries* demonstrate, Warhol adores royalty, not the subjugated masses; furthermore, he gravitates toward even Underground hierarchies, as these spring up among the dispossessed and disenfranchised (think: back room, Max’s Kansas City). The princes and princesses of the European aristocracy capture his imagination, as do even fake American royalty, like the DuPont twins—as do celebutantes, like Beauregard Houston-Montgomery and James St. James, or a Pop queen, like

Madonna, or a supermodel, like Jerry Hall.<sup>27</sup> Balanced against Hollywood royalty of the sort epitomized by Elizabeth Taylor and Marilyn Monroe, these aristocratic entities demarcate a zone of perpetual stimulation for Warhol. His aesthetic continually mines this cast of characters; the subject of journal entries, portraits and aphorisms, they turn Warhol on and on, even while boring him. Members of the Warhol clique to find Warhol revolutionary, like screenwriter Ronald Tavel or actor and muse Ondine, believe that his use for the avant-garde ends with the New Factory around 1968; after this point, Warhol's accession to worldly wealth and power prevent him from accomplishing anything legitimately "Underground." Whether or not this statement is true, 2.1 will examine both Warhol's relevance for revolutionary artmaking and his own complicated relationship to aristocracy and capitalism.

After glancing at post-revolutionary life in the New York City of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, I next analyze Warhol's irrepressible taste for the junkie. Beginning with his earliest Factory coterie (Brigid Polk, Ondine, Gerard Malanga, Edie Sedgwick), Warhol makes every effort possible to document the activities, ideas and thought processes of the drug addict, whose perceptions always generate heat. Cultivating productive aesthetic relationships with drug users and abusers, he makes the drug experience central to his cinematic and literary enterprises. On the pages of 1968's *a, a novel*, we confront the day-to-day activities of amphetamine, acid and diet-pill aficionados Ondine, Rotten Rita, and Sugar Plum Fairy: "...y'know she's

---

<sup>27</sup> In Fenton Bailey's and Randy Barbato's documentary *Party Monster* (both 1999 and 2002 versions), the celebutantes, led by James St. James, were the trust-fund partiers of the early to mid-80s. Their favorite haunt was the club Area. The Clubkid movement, inaugurated by Michael Alig, took over where the celebutantes left off. Their scene was mainly Limelight. That Andy should be drawn to the celebutantes is no surprise. Their pretensions to money, not often legitimate, mark them as "royal" to him. See also James St. James' memoir *Disco Bloodbath* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999).

resting and we're gonna take her on an LSD trip this afternoon. We're gonna go up to the hospital and put her on LSD. And we have a, we have a doctor's coat for her. A and Rotten Rita and the Mayor" (30). In the scenes of 1966's *The Chelsea Girls*, we witness Brigid Polk, Ondine and Ingrid Superstar shooting up amphetamines and popping downers: "What are you gonna do with me" (Ingrid Superstar)? "I give pokes like I give bananas" (Brigid)." In the posthumous *Diaries*, we read about the use of cocaine by the Studio 54 set: "Victor called. He said that Halston threw him out, accused him of stealing the coke. Victor says Halston keeps most of the coke in the safe but he doesn't know that Victor can open the safe. He also detected that Victor had had a gang bang because there were greasy handprints on the walls and come on the ultrasuede" (Tuesday, July 5, 1977). Ever interested in the altered state of the drug user, Warhol incorporates the drug user's perceptions into his work both to provide an account of what goes on in the demi-monde and to showcase the experience of transport effected by drug intake. Warhol also loves criminality, and for this reason above all others makes certain to include drug users in his artistic projects. Chapter 2.2 focuses on the illustrious junkies of Warhol's many circles, formulating a concept of drug-celebrity while also musing upon the status of the drug user as embodying the Romantic affection for counter-rational psychic experience.

Following these reflections on drug use and its artistic and poetic applications comes a chapter on machinehood. As Warhol never tires of admitting, he views himself as a machine. In psychoanalytic parlance, it is his ideal ego, the fictive point of identification structuring his view of himself. Furthermore, he is a machine wedded to other machines, as when, in a chapter titled "Love (Puberty)" in

*Philosophy*, he identifies his tape recorder as his wife: “So late in the 50s I started an affair with my television which has continued to the present, when I play around in my bedroom with as many as four at a time. But I didn’t get married until 1964 when I got my first tape recorder. My wife. My tape recorder and I have been married for ten years now. When I say ‘we,’ I mean my tape recorder and me. A lot of people don’t understand that” (26).<sup>28</sup> Above and beyond loving and identifying with machines, Warhol influences future aesthetic practice the most with his decision to produce fine art via the silkscreen. Selecting a signature technique which revolutionizes painting by introducing the reality of mass production into what was previously a zone of originality, Warhol accelerates Walter Benjamin’s “age of mechanical reproduction” for an artworld equally enamored and horrified. Creating “The Factory” as his home base, Warhol models his atelier on the workspaces of industrialism, which for him represent the promise of anonymity, ego dissolution and inhumanity. Toward the end of his life, Warhol even attempts to become a robot, as Bourdon reports: “Warhol also intended to be available by proxy, in the form of a robot. Broadway producer Lewis Allen arranged for the construction of a lifelike, computerized Andy Warhol robot, whose face and hands were taken from models of the artist’s body. Allen said the robot would be programmed to speak and answer

---

<sup>28</sup> In terms of Warhol being a machine connected to other machines in a more or less unbroken circuit, I offer the opening words of Deleuze’s and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983): “It is at work everywhere, functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts. It breathes, it eats. It shits and fucks. What a mistake to have ever said *the id*. Everywhere *it* is machines—real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections. An organ-machine is plugged into an energy-source-machine: the one produces a flow that the other interrupts. The breast is a machine that produces milk, and the mouth a machine coupled to it. The mouth of the anorexic wavers between several functions: its possessor is uncertain as to whether it is an eating-machine, an anal machine, a talking-machine, or a breathing-machine (asthma attacks). Hence we are all handymen: each with his little machines” (1).

questions on stage in a show called ‘Andy Warhol Overexposed: a No-Man Show,’ and that it later might have a career as a commercial spokesman. The robot promised to fulfill Andy’s long-standing dream to be replaced by a machine” (398). Why exactly Warhol should desire to become mechanized will be examined in this chapter, as well as the reasons that the machines he envies and loves are for the most part recording devices. Losing himself in the impersonal functions of the machine, Warhol distances himself from other Pop artists by his comfort with alienation. Living out a Futurist fantasy worthy of the best Marinetti poem or manifesto, Warhol becomes an art machine, a celebrity machine, even a death machine; as this machinehood is essential to his aesthetic, proliferating in new directions and only ceasing to run with Warhol’s death, it will be my point of immersion.

Since for Warhol everything begins and ends with celebrity, a chapter on what I have termed meta-celebrity will close this book. Given Warhol’s constant adoration of the stars of big and small screens alike, it is incumbent upon me to theorize the meaning of celebrity for Warhol. For Warhol is not merely a star himself; rather, he is a star made famous as a result of his own ideas about celebrity, as well as his own production of stars. In Warhol, celebrity is raised to a philosophical principle; the “meta” in “meta-celebrity” alludes to Warhol’s compulsive desire to discern the essence of starhood. Like all essences, celebrity inhabits a beyond to which meta-celebrity can only passionately point and gesticulate. Though celebrity interests Warhol in every instantiation, it is not a static concept for him; changing as popular media themselves change, celebrity permeates high and low cultures alike, redefining itself in response to new technological developments. Hence the Underground film

star epitomized by Taylor Mead in the 60s differs from the punk/disco star epitomized by Debbie Harry in her appearances on *Andy Warhol's TV* and *Andy Warhol's Fifteen Minutes* in the 80s, while the sex star best represented by Joe Dallesandro delineates a separate entity from a sports star like Muhammad Ali in the 70s and 80s. In Warhol's worlds, there are movie stars, TV stars, art stars, animal stars, architectural stars, drug stars, drag stars, star commodities, star freaks, starfuckers, and countless other permutations on the "star" theme. What this range of celebrity types points to is an underlying sensitivity to the effects of mass media on individual psychology; for example, taking in both bovine (*Cows*, 1968) and human celebrities with the same gaze, Warhol seizes upon a notion of celebrity transcending a concept of the hominid (all celebrities are objects). Moreover, as media changes, new star topographies proliferate. These realms Warhol infiltrates one celebrity at a time, growing more famous himself as he expands into ever new arenas. What the new kids on the block are up to piques Warhol's curiosity, drawing him into their respective subcultural spheres. In the 80s, for example, East Village club phenomenon John Sex catches his eye, leading to an encounter with a new type of weirdo: "Then Chris was having John Sex at his place with his boa constrictor—he uses it in his act—so I went over there to take pictures, took about three rolls, but I was scared of the snake. And the snake sleeps with him. And John has the most unusual hair, the most extreme style—a very big big exaggerated pompadour, dyed blond and hair-sprayed, and he said that when he got into a cab one day his hair was just this big mess and standing out all over the place and the cab driver said to him, 'What's that? An Andy Warhol wig?'" (*Diaries*, Monday, May 23, 1983). Ever

attentive to the celebrity surface, Warhol documents star topologies as he intersects their paths—and so we are exposed to people ranging from Bruno Bischofberger to Tinkerbelle, Dennis Hopper to Sylvia Miles. Along the way, we also see Warhol's own celebrity change, as he passes from Underground Pop artist and filmmaker to aboveground media sensation and cultural icon. Warhol's appearance on a March 1985 episode of *The Love Boat* does the best job at summarizing the stops along this path, and will consequently end my own attempt at getting Warhol. In the 80s in America, nothing announced "J'arrive!" quite like a guest spot on *The Love Boat*, and so this is where my engagement of Warhol will draw to a finale.

Making the voyage from esoteric theories about art, revolution, sublimity and post-history to the reality of an Andy Warhol guest spot on Aaron Spelling's *The Love Boat*, this collection of ruminations and peregrinations takes the widest view possible of the many meanings of Warhol's productions—meanings which begin and end in objects, yet take their own productive detours through the ideas of aesthetic theory. While one objective behind this journey is to identify Warhol's contributions to the flowering of postmodernity in America, it is also my hope to get beyond postmodernism, gleaning (if only through blurry eyes) what comes next after superficiality, irony and a comfort with capitalist alienation have lost their allure for a post-avant-garde. Never bored with Warhol, not even with his own boredom, I employ the chapters in this book to flesh out Warhol's relevance for the philosophy of art while simultaneously ignoring cultural relevance and taking his body of work as a source of interest in and of itself. The elements of Warhol's work I have identified as essential are not necessarily the only building blocks of his aesthetic vision; similarly,

the story I tell about Warhol and Romanticism is obviously not the only tale to tell about what to do with Warhol in light of the predictions aesthetic theory makes for art objects. Writing through these issues, I may even dispel them altogether, exorcising myself of my own obsessions in order to latch onto new ones (the 80s party scene epitomized by professional nightclubber Dianne Brill or the narcodynamics of the drug addict, among others). Regardless, I present an account of Warhol which tries to make sense of his triple roles as cultural impresario, pop star and philosophical mind. The other roles Warhol performs—such as the obvious ones of painter, filmmaker, diarist, and magazine publisher—are constitutive of Warhol’s existence as POMO pimp, pop tart and meta-celebrity, and will be studied for the insights they provide into his products and practices. Between Campbell’s soup and *The Love Boat* there lies a vertiginous collection of objects and people. Achieving contact with as many of these as is possible within the necessary limits of literary enterprise, I make my own inroad into what for Warhol is so much junk. For if Warhol’s Time Capsules have taught me anything, it is that, in the end, even the greatest star ends up tossed into a box with a candy-bar wrapper. All is trash, but the joy of playing in the muck remains.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Housed at Pittsburgh’s Andy Warhol Museum, Warhol’s Time Capsules represent a filing system, a reliquary, and a museum in their own right. Beginning with “The Film Time Capsule” and ending with TC 472, they are a repository of important and trivial objects. In essence, they are no more than boxes of junk, a fact not without its importance: for example, Time Capsule -2 contains a “blank piece of paper, folded.”

## 1.2 Plastic Inevitability, Aesthetic Instability

I have already observed, that night increases our terror more perhaps than anything else; it is our nature, that, when we do not know what may happen to us, to fear the worst that can happen to us; and hence it is, that uncertainty is so terrible, that we often seek to be rid of it, at the hazard of a certain mischief...But a light now appearing, and now leaving us, and so off and on, is even more terrible than total darkness; and a sort of uncertain sounds are, when the necessary dispositions concur, more alarming than a total silence” (Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, “Intermitting,” 76-77).

### Infinity in a Drop of Soup

As I have argued in 1.1, Arthur Danto’s theory of art-historicity fortuitously stumbles into the Warholian sublime. The tasks of the present chapter are to demonstrate the existence of this sublime in Danto’s thought, then to apply Danto’s sublime to Warhol. Though engaging, elegant and speculatively astute, Danto’s schema compels him to misread Warhol as a second-generation Duchamp. This limitation causes him to mistake the *Brillo Box* for a Readymade when it is really an object made to approximate the look of the Readymade (a pseudo-Readymade at best). Projecting Duchamp onto Warhol allows Danto to bolster his thesis about the history of art. Using the *Brillo Box*, he proves that art has indeed ended in line with Hegel’s predictions for its necessary and inevitable obviation (not that Hegel foresaw that a household cleaning agent would be the artworld’s last object, as Anthony

Haden-Guest's famous illustration satirizes).<sup>1</sup> Since Andy Warhol qualifies as a philosopher primarily because of his insights into celebrity, money and aesthetic transport, not merely because he has decided to end history with the *coup de grâce* of an art-box silkscreened so as to resemble an average Brillo Box, I will retain Danto's identification of Warhol as *philosopher*, yet re-examine his *philosophies*. What Danto misses about Warhol as philosopher is his continuation of other projects, the two most significant being the British Romantic project of self-fashioning evidenced by the poetry of Blake, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, and Byron, et al., and the German Idealist project of envisioning art as a mode of aesthetic transport (here "aesthetics" is regressed to *aisthesis*, or somatic experience).<sup>2</sup> These two not unrelated projects hinge on the sublime, which, as aesthetic category of supreme import—of more import than its rivals, the beautiful, the picturesque, the grotesque—becomes the yardstick against which art and self are measured in and after the Romantic moment. The sublime as Warhol deploys it carries Romanticism as far as it can go before vaporizing entirely, internally exhausted. Yet if what happens in the artworld during and after Warhol's career receives consideration, then Romanticism clearly does not end, but defers ending through increased self-referentiality, as art dies over and over

---

<sup>1</sup> Haden-Guest's cartoon is reproduced in Danto's "The Philosopher as Andy Warhol," in *The Andy Warhol Museum* (Pittsburgh: The Andy Warhol Museum, 1994, 89).

<sup>2</sup> If we follow Stephen Greenblatt in *Renaissance Self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981) and identify the Renaissance as that era when the self was first thought to be fashionable (able to be subjected to fashioning), then what must be asked is how the Romantics made this project their own. Perhaps "the alien" against which, in Greenblatt's estimation, the Renaissance self crystallized, becomes internalized by the Romantic subject, who splits into a haunted local and a hostile foreigner. Regarding the etymology of the word *aesthetics*, Hegel commentator Michael Inwood in *Hegel: Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics* (London: Penguin Books, 1993) clarifies: the word "aesthetics, first used by Baumgarten in 1739, derives from the Greek *aesthanesthai*, 'to perceive,' *aisthesis*, 'perception,' and *aisthetikos*, 'capable of perception.' Thus it is originally, as Baumgarten defines it, the 'science of sensory knowledge,' but it was soon restricted to the 'science of sensory beauty.' The term covers the beauty of nature, as well as of art" (98, n.1).

again in a loop of *hysteriasis* worthy of the juiciest Freudian case study.<sup>3</sup> Proclaiming art's death loudly and repeatedly, Warhol's art paradoxically remains alive.

Behind the paradigm of representation, expression and philosophy Danto selects for art's trajectory, behind the Hegelian glare of history, a more subtle, less grandiose Danto emerges, one who encounters the sublime element in Warhol's work without being able to comprehend or articulate it.<sup>4</sup> This Danto smells change in the air and attributes it not to the end of history but to the extension of sublimity to include objects and personalities hitherto unthinkable as aesthetically transportive. This Danto senses that Warhol's genius is not to place himself or the enterprise of artmaking outside history, but to rephrase the sublime in the most banal terms in which it can be described before dissolving completely. Perhaps collapsing to mere picturesqueness, perhaps dropping off into the bourgeois realm of beauty, perhaps falling outside sublimity and beauty into the inescapable vortex of ennui plaguing modern society, this sublime registers as distinct from its aesthetic predecessors:

---

<sup>3</sup> The best example of the pseudo-Warhol trend is Steve Kaufman, whose copies of Warhol keep it all going, so to speak (his Warholesque silkscreens of Celine Dion displayed at Las Vegas' Caesar's Palace, 2003-2004, are Celebrity Portraits in their own right). Deborah Kass' *Gold Barbra* (1992) or *Double Red Yentl, Split (My Elvis)* (1993) operate in this vein as well. Similarly, Mike Bidlo's recreation of the Factory (*Not Andy Warhol's Factory*, 1984) have fattened and mobilized Warhol. Ultimately, Warhol's own appropriation of Warhol is the best example of this trend; see his *Black and White Retrospective* (1979) and *Four Multicolored Marylins (Reversal Series)* (1979/86). See also Koestenbaum: "The desire to accrete images—dinner guests or loony residents huddled in an SRO hotel lobby—climaxed in a series of Retrospective paintings of 1979, in which he recycled his own signature forms (Marylins, Campbell soup cans, Maos, electric chairs), combining them in single paintings, as if he were inviting his own images to a 'mixer,' giving them a chance to mingle, to blend into hydra-headed unity. Meanwhile, the Reversal paintings of 1979 took the further, sinister step of reversing these trademark icons, turning them into photographic negatives; white Marilyn wore blackface" (194).

<sup>4</sup> Danto's basic schema proceeds as follows: art manifests itself in the Italian Renaissance as representation, is continued as expression by the moderns, and is brought to a close by the postmoderns, who refashion art as philosophy. See Danto's essay "The End of Art" in *The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), as well as his "Narratives of the End of Art" in *Beyond the Brillo Box: The Visual Arts in Post-historical Perspective* (New York: Noonday Press, 1992) and "Approaching the End of Art" in *The State of the Art* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987).

unlike them, it takes the perceiving subject nowhere.<sup>5</sup> Connecting Danto to the sublime or its pastiche involves revising Danto such that all in Warhol going beyond the proverbial Brillo Box—the silver wigs, the celebrity persona, the sunglasses, the happenings at the Dom in the 60s, the constant stream of weirdos at the Factory and Andy Warhol Enterprises in the 60s, 70s and 80s, the passive aggression, the stab at secular sainthood, the March 1985 *Love Boat* appearance—are mobilized.<sup>6</sup> Yet to be determined is whether Warhol's work is sublime or pseudo-sublime, whether its sublimity consists in its oscillation between sublime and mundane or in some other constitutive pulsation—hence my use of the term “pastiche” to indicate the possibility that Warhol may destroy sublimity altogether through exaggeration, repetition and blank quoting. Examining Warholian phenomena like his *perruque* or the move to become a TV entity reveals a strikingly different Warhol from the one whose aim in life is to take up the modernist quest of fixing art's identity. “Too swish” for that, Warhol cares less about the macho task of flexing his artistic muscles and more about the feminized work of rebirthing himself as commodity (in Rey Chow's lingo, he is a

---

<sup>5</sup> As a framed or tamed sublime, the picturesque is that category which denotes a neutralized and manageable sublimity. Interestingly, 18<sup>th</sup>-century writings about gardening are most useful for distinguishing the picturesque from the sublime—see, for example, William Chambers' *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening* (1772) or Uvedale Price's non-gardening piece *An Essay on the Picturesque* (1794) in Ashfield and de Bolla's *The Sublime: A Reader in British Eighteenth-century Aesthetic Theory* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1996). See also William Gilpin's *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; And On Sketching Landscape: To Which Is Added a Poem on Landscape Painting* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972) on this point.

<sup>6</sup> Jeff Koons has been the one post-Warholian artist who has best understood secular sainthood; his comment “Jeff Koons is a victim, and I hope that everyone is a victim” is profound for this reason, as is his identification of his self-consciously hideous *Puppy* as “a contemporary Sacred Heart of Jesus.” See *The Jeff Koons Handbook* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992). Pierre et Gilles have also been precocious on this point; their stylized and faux-Catholic photographs of celebrities posing as martyred saints reveal an understanding of what it means to be the analogue of a “saint” in the postmodern world, which, unlike Arendt's totalitarian regimes, cherishes its martyrologies. See *Pierre et Gilles* (Germany: Benedikt Taschen, 1993).

postmodern automaton).<sup>7</sup> For in order to become an art star, Warhol cannot end art: it must continue, or else, deprived of a matrix, he too will vanish. Without a substrate, there is no chance at survival—and so, in contradiction to Danto’s idea that Warhol ends art, Warhol must keep it going, while somehow representing and articulating its terminal state.

Furthermore, Warhol is less interested in modernist fetish *l’objet trouvé* or even *l’objet fabriqué* than in *le personnage trouvé* and *le personnage fabriqué*: finding and making people eclipse the fabrication of inanimate objects. One reading of Warhol’s famous 1966 renunciation of painting in favor of filmmaking is that, Hollywood machine, Warhol prefers to create stars rather than canvases or sculptures. Allowing art to fly out the window with his *Silver Clouds* (1966), Warhol wishes to leave painting behind for the job of refashioning ordinary human beings into celestial entities, a desire spanning the entirety of his career and marking his intrusions into new media like music video (his appearance in The Cars’ 1984 “Hello Again” or Curiosity Killed the Cat’s 1986 “Misfit” videos) and modeling (his stint as Zoli model in the 80s). Warhol views people as the ultimate item to collect, if only because, eventually, they go away; unlike the junk eventually cluttering the space of his Manhattan townhouse, they are the sort of possession which takes up space only temporarily (they leave, move out of town, experience a falling out, travel, die, while objects merely sediment until they are forcibly removed). In Koestenbaum’s words,

---

<sup>7</sup> In *POPism*, Warhol is hurt to discover that Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg find him “too swish” (11). Excessively homosexual, Warhol destabilizes even the homosexual aesthetic of post-Abstract Expressionism, which for him is refashioned into too queer an entity for the art élite. “Finally I just said something stupid: ‘I know plenty of painters who are more swish than me.’ And De said, ‘Yes, Andy, there are others who are more swish—and less talented—and still others who are less swish and just as talented, but the *major painters* try to look straight; you play up the swish—it’s like an armor with you” (12). Regarding Rey Chow, see her “Postmodern Automatons” in *Feminists Theorize the Political* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

“Another ailment was the townhouse’s disarray. Since Jed moved out, it had become an uninhabitable warehouse, the resourcefully decorated rooms now blockaded with plunder from antique stores” (189); in Pat Hackett’s, “He and I shared a 4’ by 10’ office piled—as in time I discovered *all* his offices, whatever their dimensions, would be piled—with clutter” (*Diaries*, xi). People could never create such a mess. Combining the prescription that personalities and works of art maximize their superficiality and dissimulation with the Situationist/Dadaist emphasis on the performativity of the artist, Warhol thereby fosters the production of disposable selves—this development posthumously underscored by museum catalogues like the Whitney’s *Warhol Look*, testimonies like Ultra Violet’s *Famous For 15 Minutes: My Years with Andy Warhol* and those in John O’Connor’s and Benjamin Liu’s *Unseen Warhol* (Debbie Harry, Kenny Scharf, Stephen Sprouse), or comprehensive histories of the Warhol 60s, like Steven Watson’s *Factory Made: Warhol and the Sixties* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003). Adding a concept of secular sainthood of the sort lamented by Hegel to the mix produces a Warhol whose paintings overflow their physical boundaries to encompass the Superstars generated by the Factory and Andy Warhol Enterprises.<sup>8</sup> Through individuals like Ingrid Superstar, Edie Sedgwick, Taylor Mead, Viva, Joe Dallesandro and Ultra Violet, Warhol presents the repackaging of the Romantic artist-hero as narcissistic spectacle.

Reversing the priority that the artworld in the West has since the *Quattrocento* placed on the original, the novel, the unique, and the personal, Warhol uses his

---

<sup>8</sup> In his *Introductory Lectures* to his *Aesthetics*, Hegel critiques Romanticism for producing the mania for “morbid saintliness”; this tendency he blames on the “seizure of sickly yearning” of the Fichtean school. For Hegel, Romantic melancholy is a modern perversion, and as such is one of the markers of the end of Spirit’s sojourn through the medium afforded by artistic production (“Historical Deduction of the True Idea of Art in Modern Philosophy,” XC, 73).

artworks and his Superstars, as well as himself, to grant copy supremacy over original. Mass-production of the sort popularized by Warhol and assistants like poet Gerard Malanga and Ronnie Cutrone de-emphasizes the original, while somehow making the copy valuable (the author survives the death of the author).<sup>9</sup> I term the move to redo the world as simulacra “plastic inevitability” in reference to the name used by Warhol in 1966 for his multimedia happenings at the Dom on New York City’s St. Mark’s Place. Mary Woronov recounts Warhol’s plastic inevitability in lurid detail:

Gerard raised the oversized pink plastic syringe over his head and slowly started spinning till he dropped to one knee. I held out my arm to him, my hand over the inside of my elbow as my lower body twisted to the rhythm of “Heroin.” On the ceiling an old mirror ball turned, its spots of light jumping from one dancer to another like lost souls looking for a host. The enormous faces of demented queens and ravaged superstars filled the wall behind us as if they were giants peering into a box of dancing Lilliputians, but their distorted voices and stunned expressions were only the projections of Warhol’s experimental movies. Dwarfed by Mario Montez’s lipstick-stained teeth and looking like insects that had just crawled out of his mouth, the Velvet Underground played in their wrap-around shades. This was the Dom, a Polish dance hall in the East Village where Andy put on his performance called the Exploding Plastic Inevitable so that the Velvets would have a place to play—God knows nobody else would hire them (29-30).

---

<sup>9</sup> Regarding assistant Ronnie Cutrone, the videotaped *Factory Diaries: 1965-1979* at Pittsburgh’s Andy Warhol Museum present a clip of him slicing up an *Electric Chair* and making it into a bandana (a truly stunning act of bravado and fashion savvy). I mention this fact only because I wonder which other illicit directions Warhol’s assistants took his work and how these tributaries figure in the copy/original debates.

Woronov's words describe a situation in which performance art, cinema and rock-n-roll combine into a disruptive whole. Exploding into one another, they detonate wildly, wreaking inter-generic havoc and creating a new aesthetic plasticity. For Warhol, the entire world will one day be rebirthed as such a polymer chain: plastic becomes an operational metaphor recalling the concept *poiesis* ("making"). In addition, the move to make everything synthetic entails a false democracy and populism, presupposing a future defined by decreasing socioeconomic distance and by increasingly equal access to commodities—a new globalism. Read here as a postmodern variant of Hegelian-Marxist historical necessity (the idea that the events of history, such as *Geist*'s self-consciousness or the proletarian revolution, are inevitable), a principle of plastic inevitability allows Warhol to include among the objects of the sublime those products most opposed to art: kitsch.<sup>10</sup> Works of kitsch that his paintings and protégés are, these retain a relation to art's principal aesthetic categories. That "plasticity" should colonize the world is taken for granted by Warhol, for whom the tributaries of art, kitsch and nature achieve confluence. After Andy, desires to pan-plasticize and pan-aestheticize the lifeworld know no bounds. Like it or not, we are tempted to concede along with the Wilde of *The Decay of Lying* that, indeed, the clouds have become no more than a second-rate Turner, or to complain alongside Hegel that all has become semblance or *schein*. Inevitably, plastic invades all corners of the world, turning cultural activities defining originality,

---

<sup>10</sup> For a look at the *kultur/kitsch* debates, see Clement Greenberg's "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" and "The Plight of Culture" in *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978), Andrew Ross' "Reading the Rosenberg Letters" in his *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1989), and Jennifer and Victoria Traig's *Judaikitsch: Tchotchkes, Schmattesm and Nosherei* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002).

such as painting and writing, into practices centered on factory production (the silkscreen) and dictation (his literary collaborations with Pat Hackett and Bob Colacello).

### Neither Here Nor There

In the essay “Interpretation and Identification” in *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, Danto first introduces a concept of immanent transcendence, the location of a divine presence at the heart of the mundane rather than in a privileged elsewhere. The idea of a supernatural inwardness which is also an outwardness relates to plastic inevitability in terms of the new sublimity it facilitates. Danto describes the metaphysical movement to and from the here and now in terms of the Diamond Sutra, a pivotal tract of Buddhism collapsing the distinction between Nirvana (the world transcended) and Samsara (the world inhabited) and favoring a world of mundane realities charged with transcendence via the logic of sublation (the world transcended yet inhabited). Immanent transcendence thereby produces sublimity, coming to denote a species of aesthetic transport through which the individual, standing at the chiasmus of the universal and the particular, exerts a powerful gravity. Danto quotes a passage from Diamond Sutra practitioner and master Ch’ing Yuan:

Before I had studied Zen for thirty years, I saw mountains as mountains and waters as waters. When I arrived at a more intimate knowledge, I came to the point where I saw that mountains are not mountains, and waters are not waters. But now that I have got the very substance, I am at rest. For it is just that I see

mountains once again as mountains, and waters once again as waters (134).

Danto uses the Diamond Sutra to outline the movement to and from immanence via transcendence, and to explain the indiscernibility of an art object like *Brillo Box* from a utilitarian object like a box of Brillo pads: one comes to realize that the highest degree of transcendence is found in immanence, which must be transcended only so that it can be returned to (presumably by employing “a complex set of spiritual exercises and a remarkable metaphysics and epistemology,” as Yuan and other Diamond Sutra experts have done (134)).<sup>11</sup> Postmodern sublimity is indiscernible—virtually. The circular movements defining immanent transcendence carry one to and from ordinary things; ultimately, there is no external semantic or symbolic reality authenticating aesthetic worth. “For a long time, people appreciated art as revealing a certain reality. Instead of seeing paint they saw a girl in the window, the rape of the Sabine women, the Agony in the garden, the ascension of the Virgin. And so it would be like seeing the objects of this world as essentially unreal and merely as things to be put behind as one moved to higher things, to a world beyond, which would be a certain kind of religious attitude toward the world” (133-134). And so for the modern “olefactory” painter, paint reveals itself as paint; for the Pop artist, Brillo reveals itself as Brillo.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Also related to the Diamond Sutra are the famous Ox-herding pictures; nine in total, these depict a gradual coming-to-enlightenment and a post-enlightenment emphasizing the bodhisattva’s return to Samsara. Though Danto discusses these in the essay “Language, Art, Culture, Text” in *The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art*, his intention is more to provide a theory of interpretation as transfiguration and therefore to account for the presence of absence in modern painting than to make any commentary on immanence or transcendence.

<sup>12</sup> According to Danto, “olefactory artist” (sic.) is Marcel Duchamp’s name for painters in love with the smell of paint; Danto uses it to refer to the Abstract Expressionists of the 1950s (*Transfiguration*, 132).

Outside the lifeworld and beyond the Brillo Box, there is nothing, not even ether. According to The Diamond Sutra, any and all transcendence becomes a double movement implying an inevitable return; this two-pronged course delimits the subject's loss of the very *snobbisme* or *hauteur* which induced an initial rejection of the banal and commonplace as unworthy of interest (in essence, the snob becomes bodhisattva; the philosopher escaping the Platonic cave returns to enlighten the ignorant). In this and other essays, Danto argues that the mystique of modern art lies in its transfigurative potential. Taking hold of ordinary objects, a modernist like Duchamp produces art objects virtually indiscernible from items like bicycle wheels, calendar pages or urinals, while minimalists like Barnett Newmann or Ellsworth Kelly produce patches of pure color which, theoretically, anyone could generate: "Some irrelevant mutterings aside, 'Brillo Box' was instantly accepted as art; but the question became aggravated of why Warhol's Brillo Boxes *were* works of art while their commonplace counterparts, in the back rooms of supermarkets throughout Christendom, were not. Of course there were manifest differences: Warhol's were made of plywood and the others of cardboard. But even if things were reversed, matters would have remained philosophically unaltered, leaving it then an option that really *no* material differences need distinguish the artwork from the real thing" (*The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, vi-vii). Though Danto does not expressly admit it, his theory of transfiguration finds itself undermined when the Diamond Sutra is applied to aesthetics, since it posits an unplanned-for zero-degree of transfiguration: Brillo is turned into Brillo. Voilà. This philosophical move allows

immanence and transcendence to be located in the soap pad rather than an *outré* metaphysical Elysium.

With these thoughts about Warhol's connection to the philosophical and spiritual tradition of immanent transcendence in mind, I turn to Danto's essay "The Abstract Expressionist Coca-Cola Bottle" in *Beyond the Brillo Box*. Along with a review of the 1989 Whitney Biennial describing Jeff Koons' tchotchkes in terms which would make Edmund Burke's head spin, this essay is the second Danto artifact to include a theory of the sublime, though here its inclusion seems less deliberate, even parapractic. For Danto, the sublime emerges through the holes in his (and Hegel's) metaphysics, blossoming where one finds a manifest content pronouncing the end of art. Hence, even though Danto uses the essay to situate Warhol's Pop vis-à-vis Abstract Expressionism, it achieves the alternate purpose of unearthing a postmodern sublimity at the core of the Warholian project. In this essay, Danto discusses Warhol's paintings in terms of what Feuerbach in *The Essence of Christianity* has called "sacramental celebration" and which, as Danto has stated in "Interpretation and Identification," the author(s) of the Zen text the Diamond Sutra have described as being the movement of consciousness from temporality to eternity to a temporality infused with the qualities of the eternal (as the Blake of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* notes in the 10<sup>th</sup> Proverb of Hell, "Eternity is in love with the productions of time"). Taken as such, Danto, Feuerbach and the Diamond Sutra work together cross-culturally to define the postmodern sublime as that cultural moment when banal objects of the lifeworld are seen in light of the transcendent qualities they embody: their ontological denseness becomes the source of their

sublimity. Most significantly, in this essay Danto reports having undergone a Pop conversion experience:

Pop redeemed the world in an intoxicating way. I have the most vivid recollection of standing at an intersection in some American city, waiting to be picked up.<sup>13</sup> There were used-car lots on two corners, with swags of plastic pennants fluttering in the breeze and brash signs proclaiming unbeatable deals, crazy prices, insane bargains. There was a huge self-service gasoline station on a third corner, and a supermarket on the fourth, with signs in the window announcing sales of Del Monte, Cheerios, Land-O-Lakes Butter, Long Island ducklings, Velveeta, Sealtest, Chicken of the Sea...Heavy trucks roared past, with logos on their sides. Lights were flashing. The sound of raucous music flashed out of the windows of automobiles. I was educated to hate all this. I would have found it intolerably crass and tacky when I was growing up an aesthete. As late as my own times, beauty was, in the words of George Santayana, “a living presence, or an aching absence, day and night.” I think it still is that for someone like Clement Greenberg or Hilton Kramer. But I thought, Good Heavens. This is just remarkable (140).

Although I am tempted to place Danto’s conversion experience in the larger context of conversion experiences in general, this is not the place to tease out a theory of Danto as a neo-Pascalian, nor to invoke the Kierkegaardian concepts of the “leap of faith” and *Augenblick*. As an experience of alleged conversion—albeit the strange experience revealing that one has something to learn from Las Vegas (and Levittown, and South Philadelphia, as Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown have proven)—Danto’s “Good heavens,” to which I would add several exclamation points and a star

---

<sup>13</sup> It is impossible for me to not draw attention to the fact that in this passage, Danto describes himself in the language of the prostitute; standing at an intersection and waiting to be picked up, he is converted to Pop, which has hooked him.

or two, is his acknowledgment that there is much more to Pop than the arid admission of anything and everything into the museums and galleries of the world via a principle of pluralism.<sup>14</sup> Danto couches his words in the language of the sublime. With its flashing lights and thumping music and apparent infinitude of supermarket advertisements and product names, this quoted passage asserts that, yes, indeed, there is something truly marvelous about consumer culture and its utter vacuousness, something spiritually gorgeous about its vulgarity. “Velveeta,” “Sealtest,” “Chicken of the Sea”: even the textual surface of the product name inspires transport, just as the phonetic titillation of the very word “Brillo” arrests the attention in another context. Products and their respective discourses assault the senses with an unprocessable barrage of stimulants. Unable to carry on, the mind experiences the pleasure of its failure. The product name casts an onomastic spell not unlike the one cast by the place name or the family surname in Proust: the proper noun carries one away on waves of *mémoire involuntaire*.

Here Danto introduces the idea that the auto-referentiality (in Benoit Mandelbrot’s fractal theory: self-similarity) of the commonplace object constitutes its sublimity. Danto makes this claim in reference to Warhol’s 1976 *Still Life (Hammer and Sickle)*, which in his estimation makes the ultimate Communist symbol into a *tableau mort* in order to put it into the service of capitalism: “To deconstruct the emblem of an opposing political system and re-create it as a still life is exactly to drain it of life. He never did that with Brillo or Campbell’s Soup. He made effigies

---

<sup>14</sup> That Pop requires a conversion experience is evidence that I would deviously cite in favor of a popular culture in which the world of pop persons and objects and experiences is permeated with sublimity. Conversion to Pop is a strange occurrence, and Danto’s isn’t the only one: see Jameson’s radical disorientation in the space of Los Angeles’ Westin Bonaventure Hotel in *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* for a second example of a modernist lost in Pop.

of them, almost idols, almost stars, but never still lifes” (136). With something like Campbell’s Soup, Warhol celebrates the living, revealed as sacramental:

Think of someone who drinks the wine and takes the bread on his tongue as a religious act, but not in the spirit so much of transubstantiation as of transfiguration; who ingests these substances as themselves and as *self*-symbolizing, in Feuerbach’s expression ‘In sacramental celebration of their earthly truth’—the bread symbolizing bread, the wine wine, rather than flesh and blood respectively. That would be exactly the spirit of Warhol: his soups are in sacramental celebration of their earthly reality, simply as what one might call one’s daily soup, as what one eats day after day, as he said he himself did (136).

The “sacramental celebration” of Campbell’s Tomato Soup consists in its relation to the diurnal. Verging on secular ritualism, the Campbell’s scene is enacted and reenacted time and time again without the hungry soup aficionado recognizing this behavior as a compulsive and repeatable event so paralleling the rites and procedures of religious services and mysteries that it too becomes one. When the secular ritual becomes self-conscious—when the soup aficionado comes to realize something like “Wow, I’ve eaten Campbell’s Tomato Soup every day for the last three decades!”—then the self is converted. Witnessing sudden depth, the soup eater sees soup as symbolizing itself: as pointing outside itself to itself, representing itself, universalizing its own particularity and particularizing its universality. The act of scarfing down a bowl of soup semantically exceeds the drab details of that ingestion—you get the can out of the cupboard, subjugate it to the violence of the can-opener, pour out its contents into a bowl you bought at the local Versace boutique, microwave it for three minutes, then slurp it down while watching *The*

*Young and the Restless*— suggest.<sup>15</sup> The movement inherent to the act of sacramentally celebrating something may be mathematically redescribed as the mapping of  $x$  onto  $x$ ,  $y$  onto  $y$ ,  $z$  onto  $z$ , as opposed to the mapping inherent to transfiguration, by which  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$  are mapped onto coordinates outside themselves— $x'$ ,  $y'$ ,  $z'$ .<sup>16</sup> Applying Feuerbach's comment to Warhol, Danto reveals Warhol's indebtedness to minimalism and to Greenbergian Formalism, both of which had taught him the idea of minimal artistic intervention which a work like Duchamp's *Fountain*, with its requisite "art coefficient," epitomizes, perhaps exhausts.<sup>17</sup> For the *objet trouvé* invokes the sacramentally celebratory, deconcealing the importance and utter vitality of the everyday. As William Wordsworth's *Lucy* cycle makes abundantly clear, the possibility of being overlooked and unnoticed produces the lone flower's sublimity.<sup>18</sup> Potentially unidentifiable as beautiful by those persons who

---

<sup>15</sup> Some of my favorite Warhol's are the soup can paintings and drawings which depict cans in the process of being opened, which have already been opened, or which, in being opened, have begun to serve some new purpose: examples include *Big Open Campbell's Soup Can (Beef Noodle)* (1962), *Campbell's Soup Can with Can Opener* (1962) and *Campbell's Soup Can and Dollar Bills* (1962). Other pieces subjugating cans of Campbell's Soup to violence are the torn label series—e.g. *Big Torn Campbell's Soup Can* (1962) and *Big Soup Can with Torn Label (Pepper Pot)* (1962). More ominous yet is the abject *Can* (1962); this drawing depicts a totally nude can which may or may not be full of anything.

<sup>16</sup> In mathematics, "mapping" is the process whereby one figure inhabiting a particular coordinate system is converted into a new figure inhabiting a new coordinate system. Applying a formula to the first figure, for example " $x + 7$ " to the point  $x$ , produces the mapped point  $x'$  (read "x prime"; if  $x = 8$ , then  $x' = 15$ , etc.). I introduce mapping as a concept in order to demonstrate what happens in the experience of immanent transcendence: rather than finding itself remapped in a new Cartesian grid, the immanently transcendent object goes nowhere, beginning and ending in itself.

<sup>17</sup> In his essay "The Creative Act," Duchamp defines the "art coefficient" as the work which a spectator must perform in order for an art object to generate meaning and to undergo completion; see *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1989). Also related to this discussion is John Keats' notion of negative capability, or the idea of artist as "automatic" conduit—a process seized upon by Breton and other Surrealist poets.

<sup>18</sup> "She dwelt among th' untrodden ways/  
Beside the springs of Dove,  
A Maid whom there were none  
to praise/  
And very few to love.  
A Violet by a mossy stone/  
Half-hidden from the Eye!  
—Fair, as a star  
when only one/  
Is shining in the sky" (1-8; "Song"). Connected to loss, Lucy's cessation produces an experience of sublimity in her lover, who posits her beauty as inaccessible to the living. See also the poem "Strange fits of passion I have known," in which the stray thought of Lucy's loss—"Oh mercy!" to myself I cried,/ 'If Lucy should be dead!'" (26-28)—shakes up its thinker. My source for these and other poems is *William Wordsworth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

would be too busy searching for items of aesthetic value elsewhere to notice the delicate and fragile nexus of the universal and the particular dancing at their feet, it embodies an impossible beauty. Elided, this impossible beauty catapults one into the aesthetic plenitude of sublimity. In his paintings, Warhol sacramentally celebrates kitsch; isolating it and presenting it in vivid colors (the Fauve soups of 1965), large quantities (i.e. serially-reproduced multiples: *100 Campbell's Soup Cans*, 1962), and auto-referential heaps (*Black and White Retrospective*, 1979), he maps it onto itself, revealing its quasi-religious status as pop icon. Secular, specular and spectacular, sacramental celebration à la Warhol posits kitsch as the startling endpoint of immanent transcendence, which carries us from the *Lebenswelt* only to return us to its grossest and most unredeemable aspects. There is no escape, only immersion.

### More

Danto provides further insights into postmodern sublimity with his subjective reactions to Jeff Koons' phantasmagoric figurines in *The Whitney Biennial, 1989*. Dimensions of the sublime first enumerated by Edmund Burke in his *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* are here transferred to the realm of kitsch, which surfaces as the new destroyer. Darkness, vastness and terror now belong to the trash object. In his enquiry, Burke opposes sublimity to beauty, locating the beautiful among the world's tame and submissive objects of fancy, whim, and delectation and the sublime among the dark and violent forces of nature which unsettle and terrify the individual subject, who is threatened with

annihilation.<sup>19</sup> Hence the gazer annihilates the beautiful, while sublimity annihilates the gazer: “Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I say the strongest emotion, because I am satisfied the ideas of pain are much more powerful than those which enter on the part of pleasure” (Section VI: “Of the passions which belong to self-preservation,” 35-36). In reviewing the entries in what Danto identifies as a junk-saturated biennial, Danto once again inadvertently unearths a postmodern or bourgeois sublime: danger zone. This time, Danto seizes upon the reference to infinity located at the heart of consumer culture and its heterogenous array of mass-produced celebrities and commodities, a cornucopia including even the self.<sup>20</sup> Danto’s reaction to Koons’ ceramic nightmares is telltale. Re-defining kitsch as a class of once devalued objects no longer suffering under delusions of grandeur (*kitsch* wants to be and mistakes itself as *kultur*), but desiring itself as itself (*kitsch* wants to be *kitsch*), Danto catalogues Koons’ sublime objects as he previously encountered them at the Sonnabend Gallery in 1988:

I am referring to cute figurines in thruway gift shops;  
the plaster trophies one wins for knocking bottles over  
in cheap carnivals; marzipan mice; the dwarves and  
reindeer that appear at Christmastime on suburban

---

<sup>19</sup> Gendering the sublime becomes a problem—for, if, as Burke alleges, the beautiful is the feminine, then the sublime must be masculine. What it means for the male aesthete to find himself lost in the pleasures of being subjugated to an annihilating male principle constitutes perhaps the homoerotic truth of sublimity.

<sup>20</sup> Here I have in mind Theses #87 and #88 in Guy Debord’s *Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone Books, 1995). For Debord, only the bourgeois revolution has taken place; it is a “fait accompli,” while the proletarian revolution is a “project” (58). For me, the postmodern sublime is inherently bourgeois; it denotes the aesthetic taste of a post-revolutionary class (2.1 will illuminate this point further).

lawns or the crèche figures before firehouses in Patchogue and Mastic; bath toys; porcelain or plastic saints; what goes into Easter baskets; ornaments in fishbowls; comic heads attached to bottle stoppers in home bars. Koons has claimed this imagery as his own, has taken over its colors, its cloying saccharinities, its gluey sentimentalities, its blank indifference to the existence and meaning of high art, and given it a monumentality that makes it flagrantly visible, a feast for appetites no one dreamt existed and which the world hates itself for acknowledging. There was a figure of a man smiling with intolerable benignity at an armful of blue puppies that haunts me like a bad dream. The aggregation of rebarbative effigies at the Sonnabend Gallery was a vision of an aesthetic hell (280-281).

Although the sublime as formulated by Burke (or Kant) does not normally take as its object such a stream of filth from the lifeworld, in the Koons scenario the sublime is mysteriously generated by the horrors of the trash object. Multiplying unchecked, it absorbs more and more cultural and physical space (the trash object knows no prophylaxis). Pathological, these disposable cultural rejects reassert themselves, terrifying the aesthete (here Danto) into recognizing their *puissance*. That they should wield any power is startling, pointing to a new cultural and “sensational” (i.e., *aesthetic*) development. Following Warhol’s program, Koons’ art represents a kitsch which has come into its own, threatening nature and culture alike with irrelevance.

Kitsch as Warhol and Koons deploy it is a far cry from the kitsch Andrew Ross discusses in *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (kitsch as a pathogen in need of *cordon sanitaire*) or the kitsch Susan Sontag uses as the basis for her theory of camp in “Notes on Camp” (kitsch as the abject homosexual’s good taste of bad taste), for, as Danto has astutely commented, the crucial dimension of *pretension* is erased from the *kitsch/kultur* equation. No longer bent on ingratiating itself into the

world of high art, kitsch, self-sufficient, self-satisfied and self-pleasuring, exhibits “blank indifference” to the artworld. Apart from the appropriative actions of slumming artists, *kitsch* detaches itself completely from *kultur*, resting content in its own status as cultural slurry. For Danto, the horror of kitsch is that, in the postmodern condition, kitsch loses sight of the aesthetic world it *should* want to penetrate. Instead of aping the objects of high art and claiming itself to be one of its siblings, as the old kitsch had done, this more mature kitsch has become narcissistically lost in its own aesthetic vacuity. Phrased in the language of sacramental celebration, kitsch maps itself onto itself in a moment of pop-cultural plenitude. The original “art-forward” kitsch of, for example, Cold War American lowbrow or mass culture was not sublime and, in fact, verged on the abject, but the new kitsch of Warhol and Koons is sublime by virtue of the delicious horror it inspires in its consumer. Coming to realize that there exists an entire class of objects below art which do not wish to *become* art because they are infinitely self-satisfied with their own fallenness, the consumer of kitsch is knocked for a loop. No longer fallen at all, kitsch flaunts its imperfections, producing a merriness, a festivity, even a jouissance.<sup>21</sup> As Milan Kundera has commented, “Kitsch causes two tears to flow in quick succession. The first tear says: How nice to see children running on the grass! The second tear says: How nice to be moved, together with all mankind, by children

---

<sup>21</sup> Given that the art/kitsch or kultur/kitsch distinction is most often gendered such that “art” or *kultur* are masculine and *kitsch* is feminine, it is to Koons’ credit that he rehabilitates kitsch. For more on the art/kitsch divide and its ramifications for gender theory, see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s “Some Binarisms (II): Wilde, Nietzsche, and the Sentimental Relations of the Male Body” (131-181) in *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California, 1990). Sedgwick’s concept of “kitsch-attribution” is especially useful; along with “camp-recognition,” it defines the response of the consumer to the trash object, which is either attributed to others (kitsch), or used to project a possible community (camp).

running on the grass! It is this second tear that makes kitsch kitsch.”<sup>22</sup> To pervert Kundera’s phrase, the second tear which thinks “Look at me—I’m moved” loses the memory of its connection to the first tear, with the effect being that this second, kitschy tear extricates itself from any notion of succession; in its amnesia, this second tear mistakes itself for the first and only tear. Such are the movements and machinations of kitsch, forgetting *kultur* while replacing and erasing it, therein setting itself up as a detached and independent *kultur*.

Although Danto does not explicitly refer to Warhol’s work in the same language he uses to describe Koons’ work, I argue that the comments Danto makes regarding Koons’ hellish knick-knacks such as *Pink Panther* (1988) can be applied to the whole gamut of Warhol’s *oeuvres*, from supercommodities to superstars. Warhol’s ghastly collection of objects paves the way for Koons’ (and others’) perversions by first introducing the very radical notion that there need not be any animosity between the object of kitsch and the creator of the avant-garde, that objects of kitsch can take over the project of sublimity from high art. This conclusion is rendered even more problematic when one comes to realize that, for Warhol, “work of art” and “work of kitsch” come to mean primarily *personalities* and not the traditional cultural débris used to fill galleries and museums. For Warhol, art is very rarely on the walls, but is more often who comes to see whatever is on the walls, or who comes to stand around whatever is hanging on the walls, to out-art art.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Milan Kundera’s definition of kitsch is quoted in Renata Salecl, *The Spoils of Freedom: Psychoanalysis and Feminism After the Fall of Socialism* (London: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>23</sup> In Chuck Workman’s documentary *Superstar* (1991), Ultra Violet arrives at Warhol’s posthumous Retrospective sporting a hat which spells out “ULTRA” in rhinestones: clearly, she is in competition with Warhol’s paintings. For other examples of the desire to out-art art on the part of the Superstars, see Ultra Violet’s book *Famous for Fifteen Minutes* (New York: Avon Books, 1988) or Jean Stein’s *Edie: an American Biography* (New York: Dell, 1982).

Warhol's supreme example of up-staging art would be his 1965 Philadelphia ICA opening, at which all art was removed from the walls and Edie and Andy stole the show as personalities:

When we walked into the Philadelphia opening, there were floodlights turned on us and television cameras. It was very hot and I was all in black—T-shirt, jeans, short jacket, what I always wore in those days—and the yellow-lens wraparound sun/ski glasses didn't keep the glare out; I wasn't ready for it.

There were four thousand kids packed into two rooms. They'd had to take all my paintings—my “retrospective”—off the walls because they were getting crushed. It was fabulous: an art opening with no art! Sam stood there in his white jacket and Green Stamps silk tie—the members of the advisory board were running around in their Green Stamps silk blouses—and told the press that nobody came to art openings to see the art anyway. The music was going full blast and all the kids were doing the jerk to songs like “Dancin’ and Prancin’” and “It’s All Over Now” and “You Really Turn Me On”...

Edie was wearing a pink Rudi Gernreich floor-length T-shirt dress made out of stretchy Lurex-type material. It had elastic sleeves that were supposed to stay rolled up but she unrolled one them above twelve feet past her arm—perfect for this setup, because she could have a drink in one hand and be draping and dipping and dangling her sleeve over the heads of the crowd below. She was putting on the performance of her life (*POPism*, 131-132).

Danto's reaction to Koons' creations is thus an indirect response to Warhol's creations, which are perhaps the first in the history of Western art elevating kitsch to the lofty status generally attributed to the work of art and raising personality to the status of commodity. For although Warhol's immediate cultural predecessors, the

Dadaists and Surrealists, played many games with kitsch qua *objet trouvé*, their intention was not to infuse kitsch with the qualities of the art object, but rather to critique bourgeois aesthetics by assaulting bourgeois taste with objects it should never assimilate, but of course *would* (hence Guy Debord's comment in Thesis #191 of his *Society of the Spectacle* that Dada "sought to abolish art without realizing it," while Surrealism "sought to realize art without abolishing it."). What Danto responds to in Koons' work is the perversity of Koons' assertion that the goofy, vapid, cornball objects associated with lowbrow culture have been validated by way of their inclusion into that class of objects associated with highbrow culture. This state of affairs is precisely the aspect of Warhol's work which has inspired Koons to commission and appropriate his ceramic playthings and to turn the heroic activity of artmaking into play.<sup>24</sup>

In refashioning Danto as an accidental neo-Burkean, I mean to bring out the darker dimension of Warhol's work, which continues the Romantic glamourization of drugs, altered states of consciousness, natural marvels, and social pariahs. For Warhol's works are deeply immersed in these manifestations of the sublime, and as such constitute a cultural mortuary filled with faded stars (Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley), ephemeral Underground celebrities (Ultra Violet, Edie Sedgwick, Taylor Mead), anonymous car crash, suicide and food poisoning victims (the Death and Disaster series, 1963), drug burnouts (the Duchess, Nico, Eric Emerson, Ondine),

---

<sup>24</sup> The playfulness of contemporary art is something Danto seizes upon in his review of the 1989 Whitney Biennial, which he describes as a "toyland for sophisticates" (282); as proof, he refers to Mike Kelly's stitched-together stuffed animal orgies, Chris Burden's submarine effigies, Sherry Levine's appropriated stills from *Krazy Kat*, and the like. As I have intimated in this chapter, why "happy" should pose such a problem for Danto is something I cannot understand: for example, does the play of the Rococo disturb him similarly? I don't think it does, for the Rococo is a play *within* and not *outside* history.

slumbering souls lost in dreams, orgasms and other states of rêverie (*Blow Job*, 1963; *Sleep*, 1963; *Silver Clouds*), and secular equivalents to awe-inspiring feats of nature (*Empire*, 1964). Here, Warhol's logic of serial reproduction harkens back to Burke's identification of "artificial infinity," or the way in which sublimity is generated by a reference to infinity: "And it must be observed, that expectation itself causes a tension. This is apparent in many animals, who, when they prepare for hearing any sound, rouse themselves, and prick up their ears; so that here the effect of the sounds is considerably augmented by a new auxiliary, the expectation. But though after a number of strokes, we expect still more, not being able to ascertain the exact time of their arrival, when they arrive, they produce a sort of surprise, which increases this tension yet further" (Section XI, *The Artificial Infinite*, 126-127). Producing the expectation of a more, Warhol's works also speak to Joseph Tabbi's thesis in *Postmodern Sublime: Technology and American Writing from Mailer to Cyberpunk* that the subject's inability to totalize the postmodern world marks that world as sublime; similarly, in the essay "Economimesis," Jacques Derrida describes the "exemplorality" or "exemplary orality" of the Kantian subject as fundamentally emetic, since that subject can only vomit up the world's material excess.<sup>25</sup> In combination with the sacramentally celebratory element in Warhol's work, the darker side of Warhol—evident in paintings like *Ambulance Disaster Two Times* (1963), *White Car Crash Nineteen Times* (1963) or *Lavender Disaster* (1963), in films like

---

<sup>25</sup> In Derrida's estimation, Kant's sublime is emetic in that fills one up with too much material. This excess can only be vomited: "What this logo-phonocentric system excluded is not even a negative. The negative is its business and its work. What it excludes, what this very work excludes, is what does not allow itself to be digested, or represented, or stated, does not allow itself to be transformed into auto-affection by exemplorality. It is an irreducible heterogeneity which cannot be beaten either sensibly or ideally and which—this is the tautology—by never letting itself be swallowed must therefore *cause itself to be vomited*" (21). See "Economimesis" (*Diacritics*, June 1991, 1-25).

*Lonesome Cowboys* (1967), *Vinyl* (1965), or *Trash* (1970), and in the constant scrambling among the Superstars for attention from their guru, as demonstrated by Time Capsule (-)12's July 10, 1966 letter from Gerard Malanga to Warhol over Warhol's cooptation of *Chelsea Girls* star Mary Woronov—enriches his sublime, which comes to mark the furthest point that the sublimity of the Romantics can reach before it collapses into mundane nothingness.<sup>26</sup> The Warholian sublime is thus deeply ironic, flirting with two possibilities simultaneously: the possibility of sublimity and the possibility of complete and utter mundanity. As a pastiche or parody of *itself*, this sublime represents the outer limit or horizon of sublimity. Combusting internally, the sublime can only exist as meta-commentary itself and its history.

For Burke, an event's ability to transport its subject to a realm of terror where one's subjectivity may be annihilated characterizes that event as sublime. As such, sublimity contrasts with its submissive sibling beauty, whose objects are marked by their submission to and annihilation by a consumer's subjectivity. This definition of the sublime influences subsequent aesthetics, poetics and personality formation from German, French and English Romanticism through international modernism through the largely American switch from modernism to postmodernism Warhol effects and exports. While in other artists and poets—the paradigmatic case would be the Percy

---

<sup>26</sup> Malanga's letter reads: "Second, I didn't consider the fact that while I was away you would be socializing with Mary, filling her head with delusions of commercial grandeur...I've never been mean to Mary. I've only been mean to myself; but Mary's 'problems' are no longer my concern. Her future is yours." He also expresses displeasure at being replaced by "the 43<sup>rd</sup> Street Clique" as Victor in *Chelsea Girls*' "The Queen of China." Evidently, Woronov had stolen a bra advertisement from Brigid Polk, as Malanga complains that Woronov made \$150 for a spot that had been the Duchess'. Regarding the numerology of the Time Capsules, some are numbered with positive numerals, while others are numbered with negative ones. According to the Andy Warhol Museum, the positive and negative signs are merely an archival device and do not represent a meaningful choice on the part of Warhol.

Shelley of “Mont Blanc” or “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty”—the sublime is treated with respect and earnestness, in Warhol it is treated with inoculating playfulness and irony. Enjoying and employing the sublime in such a fashion rings in postmodernism: making copying a high cultural practice and pronouncing the imperative that the artist dissimulate, Warhol’s sublime brings aesthetic transport to the brink of its disappearance. And while in Burke the sublime is regarded with awe and reverence, in Warhol it is regarded with the cool Pop “Wow” or “Gee Whiz” (Thomas de Quincey’s *tedium vitae* claims another victim: even the sublime is a snooze).<sup>27</sup> This double movement lies at the heart of the sublime’s postmodern variant, its self-conscious superficiality containing a knowledge of and satisfaction with its own contingency.

Interestingly enough, the awe and reverence which are for Burke the proper response to the sublime are in Warhol reserved not for nature or the artworld, but for stars like Elizabeth Taylor, who are responded to with a performance of self-effacement and transfiguration. Thus the disruption of the original/copy antinomy in Warhol refers primarily to the objects of the artworld, for when it comes right down to it, Warhol retains the original/copy distinction with reference to celebrity (there is ultimately only one Liz). Though he might copy Liz over and over again and make her image a cliché— *The Men in Her Life (Mike Todd and Eddie Fisher)* (1962), *Blue Liz as Cleopatra* (1962), *Double Liz* (1963), *Ten Lizes* (1963), *Early Colored Liz* (1963), *Portrait of Liz* (1963-4), *'65 Liz* (1965)—he still treats her with the

---

<sup>27</sup> In his 1856 revision of *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (London: Penguin, 1986), de Quincey blames the consumption of laudanum on, among other things, “the formidable curse of *taedium vitae*,” or the weariness of life (135). That “boredom” or worldly exhaustion should figure into the “transport experience” comes as no surprise; it is, in fact, endemic to Romanticism’s desire for the aesthetic high. Chapter 2.2, *The Drug Narrative*, develops this idea in more detail.

breathlessness and reverence reserved in previous ages for the original subjects and objects of Romantic sublimity, such as omnipotent deities (Demogorgon in Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*) or aberrant features of the natural landscape ("the Alps" of John Dennis or William and Dorothy Wordsworth). Clearly, Liz is not human, as entries in the *Diaries* indicate:

Got to the St. Regis for the Jewish Anti-Defamation League testimonial to Liz Taylor... They gave Liz the plaque which had raw amethyst all over it—the stuff ashtrays are made of—it was of Mt. Sinai and at the top in gold was the Ten Commandments. Liz was in river purple, she got up and gave a little speech, very breathy and sincere, like "I'm just like all of you—when I care about something, I do something about it, we're all like that, thank you so much."... Then she and Halston got off the dais to make a trip to the bathroom and one of the ladies at Bob's table wondered, "Why are they *both* going to the bathroom?" And another lady said, "Maybe she ripped her dress and Halston's going to sew it for her" (Thursday, June 9, 1977).

The secular sainthood which Warhol attributes to Liz and other stars (Jackie, Marilyn, Elvis) and which Edie Sedgwick, Taylor Mead and others attribute to themselves is a development within and not outside of the Burkean sublime, which gets not *rejected*, but *ironized* ("ironed"). The flattening out of the Burkean sublime beginning with Warhol and continuing through the work of artists like Jeff Koons, Pierre et Gilles, Andres Serrano and, most acutely, Mike Bidlo, Sherry Levine and Steve Kaufman, carries on the Romantic tradition of structuring the artwork and the art-personality with a view to the sublime. As much more than a motif, the sublime is a part of postmodernism's logic, which reproduces and infuses the grossest aspects of the lifeworld with energy, spirituality and glamour. Baudelaire's desire to redeem the

hideous and tasteless in collections like *Les Fleurs du Mal* and *Paris Spleen*—prostitutes, impoverished urchins playing with rats, lumpenproletariat freakshows—reaches an apex in Warhol, who when the 60s end continues this project by redeeming even the most mundane and boring objects of sub-kitsch (the Underground’s seamy aboveground).

And Warhol is right: the tradition of the sublime contains prescriptions for both artworks and selves, which are produced in the work of art’s sublime image. Warhol revises the requirement that the self reproduce itself as a work of art (the Romantic prescription), in its place recommending that the self reproduce itself in kitsch’s image: recasting art as kitsch makes a formulation such as this not merely possible, but logical, indeed inevitable. In the future, even the self will be synthesized in a DuPont oven (fashion creature Amanda Lepore is a testament to this eventuality).<sup>28</sup> The ephemeral selves crowding the Factory and Andy Warhol Enterprises, littering the pages of *Interview*, and filling up rolls of film are campier and more ironic than the selves crowding the England of the Romantics or the Paris of the moderns. Though “flatter” and more superficial, these selves are a part of a larger trend: the aestheticization of selfhood inaugurated by the Romantics. The story of modern aesthetic selfhood in the West takes as protagonists characters like, among others, Friedrich Nietzsche, Percy and Mary Shelley, Lord Byron, Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, Aubrey Beardsley, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Cravan, Mina Loy, Isadora Duncan, Gertrude Stein and Andy Warhol and his Superstars, star practitioners of

---

<sup>28</sup> See David LaChapelle’s photographs of Amanda Lepore in *Lachapelleland* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996) as well as Lara Lee’s film *Synthetic Pleasures* (Caipirinha Productions, 1996) and Mont Blanc’s 2004 advertising campaign. Like Los Angeles’ Angelyne, Amanda Lepore proves that, to use the language of cybernetics, it is indeed possible to transcend DNA-based representation and replication.

selfhood. Positing selfhood as *kitsch* is Warhol's most radical act, more radical than positing art object as kitsch. Equating "self" with "kitsch" interferes with the modern cultural imperative that the self rebirth itself as unique and stable, replacing this formula for selfhood with the recommendation that the self ambivalently produce itself as something disposable, fluffy and evanescent. The planned obsolescence of capitalism's many commodities reproduces itself in the sphere of personality, which gives birth to a host of discrete individuals whose obsolescence is similarly guaranteed. For example, the "Girl of the Year" title which so many of the Superstars coveted and earned—Baby Jane Holzer (1964), Edie (1965), Nico (1966)—is predicated upon the notion that every year there will be a new girl to replace the old girl, whether or not the new girl is any better than the old girl. Similarly, Warhol's own fickleness regarding the Superstars—he would be inseparable from someone for a while, then be inseparable from someone else for a while, then be inseparable from someone else for a while, as best documented by *POPism* and the *Diaries*—is evidence of an obsolescence central to his aesthetic. That selves and works of art should be ephemeral and short-lasting contrasts sharply with the Romantic quest for works of art and personalities able to withstand the test of time and to oppose the brute commodity fetishism of capitalism, the products of which come and go according to the whim, fad and fancy of the masses. Embracing capitalism and its aesthetics of conspicuous consumption, flagrant decoration, and waste, Warhol closes the gap between art and economics beginning with Romanticism (e.g., Wordsworth's "The world is too much with us" sonnet) and climaxing with high modernism (T.S.

Eliot's "The Waste Land"), transfiguring art objects and personalities into frivolous eye-glutting spectacles.

### Less

Yet emptiness is not a negative intensity for Warhol, who, in true capitalist fashion, prefers it to fullness for complex post-existential and post-Abstract Expressionist reasons. In Chapter 10 of his *Philosophy*, aptly entitled "Atmosphere," Warhol articulates his preference for emptiness in the context of observations about emptiness, fullness, and waste. For Warhol, there exists a constitutive tension between acquisition and loss, ingestion and excretion. This vacillation is of a piece with Danto's identification of a postmodern sublime founded upon an experience of material excess (a transcendent immanence), and also with the Burkean proposition that reference to infinity generates sublimity. Furthermore, it speaks to Kant's notion of the mathematically sublime in his *Critique of Judgment*: by virtue of its immeasurableness, the mathematically sublime threatens the mind's faculty of judgment with humiliation. "Atmosphere" expresses Warhol's gravitation toward the empty: "I really believe in empty spaces, although, as an artist, I make a lot of junk. Empty space is never-wasted space. Wasted space is any space that has art in it" (143). Related to this quote are Warhol's earlier words made in reference to *Silver Clouds*; David Bourdon reports: "Warhol's claim that the clouds were disposable for people who felt burdened by too many possessions certainly didn't help lift sales. As he remarked in a television interview at the time: 'You open a window and let them

float away and that's one less object'" (230). As an artist, Warhol necessarily fills space with his creations; hence his anxieties about wasting and over-filling space center on his own identity as fabricator of things. Like Dr. Frankenstein's productions, the things he creates take on a life of their own, unsettling their originator, who has discovered the principle of "animation" or "vitalism" foundational to the capitalist mechanism of commodity fetishism. Warhol the collector and connoisseur also fills space with what he obtains via the exchange of cash for commodity—yet unlike the Benjaminian collector, who experiences through the act of collection the closest tenable relationship with the inanimate and insensate, the Warholian collector is not satisfied with the filling of space that the act of collection necessarily entails.<sup>29</sup> As soon as he fills space, he wishes to empty it—the juncture of epicureanism and emetics:

Tennessee Williams saves everything up in a trunk and then sends it out to a storage place. I started off myself with trunks and the odd pieces of furniture, but then I went around shopping for something better and now I just drop everything into the same-size brown cardboard boxes that have a color patch on the side for the month and the year. I really hate nostalgia, though, so deep down I hope they all get lost and I never have to look at them again. That's another conflict. I want to throw things right out the window as they're handed to me, but instead I say thank you and drop them into the box-of-the-month. But my other outlook is that I really do want to save things so they can be used again someday (145).

---

<sup>29</sup> Benjamin explores the collector's relationship to the collectible in his essay "Unpacking My Library" in the collection *Illuminations* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968): "O bliss of the collector, bliss of the man of leisure!... For inside him there are spirits, or at least little genii, which have seen to it that for a collector—and I mean a real collector, a collector as he ought to be—ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them" (67).

Both amassing and anticipating loss, both hoarding and disseminating, Warhol is so spatially addled as to desire tossing the immediately acquired out the window—an act of commodity defenestration evocative of potlach, overindulgence and retail guilt, as well as the frustration of the nostalgia and sentimentality which objects both deposit and accrete.

For Kant, the mathematically sublime is possible when either quantity or magnitude are so massive as to make the act of measurement impossible. Unlike the dynamically sublime in nature, it taunts judgment not with climatological or geological precariousness, but with sheer physical excess: “If, however, we call anything not alone great, but, without qualification, absolutely, and in every respect (beyond all comparison) great, that is to say, sublime, we soon perceive that for this it is not permissible to seek an appropriate standard outside itself, but merely in itself. Hence it comes that the sublime is not to be looked for in the things of nature, but only in our own ideas” (§25, 97). For Kant, the mathematically sublime’s literal incomparability awakens in the judging mind a “supersensible faculty” (97) which, eclipsing judgment, founds the experience of sublimity upon the inability of the mind’s aesthetic mechanism to analyze the magnificent. The Pop-converted Danto standing transfixed by effigies, images and names of Velveeta and Sealtest returns. The unbridled force of stimuli from the world of pop cultural advertising causes his faculty of judgment to overheat: simply put, there is more stuff than can be absorbed, understood or processed. Presenting his mind with a barrage of referents and signifiers, the street scene is too phenomenologically rich to be catabolized; like Kant’s mathematical sublime, it can only be compared with itself, and hence cannot

be judged effectively by the imagination. For Kant, the mind's rational component saves face with its capacity to perform this function. The aesthetic pleasure of the sublime lies in the sacrifice the judgment must make to the supersensible. For the mathematically sublime, there is no external standard of measurement or comparison, and hence no way to totalize the mathematically unwieldy. It is impossible to discern an inside from an outside: no such membrane may be drawn. Since the mathematically sublime is beyond compare, the mind has no way to render it scrutable (until, of course, the imagination makes its proper sacrifice and the reasoning faculty takes over).<sup>30</sup> Consequently, Danto undergoes a prototypical Warholian experience as street sensations overwhelm him; the obvious comparison with the Proust of *The Captive* rings true, since he too experiences the pleasures of being immersed in the semantic order of advertising. While for Warhol the stuffing of an external space (i.e., a room) generates discomfort, for Danto the jamming of an internal space (the sensorium) produces both an anxiety and an awe built upon that anxiety. Here the operative crossroads is the nexus of the full with the empty, the teeming with the vacant; here the sublime finds its home in the push and pull of hoarding and releasing. Going anal, it reveals a sphincteral truth.

Rephrasing problems of space as exigencies of atmosphere, Warhol relies less on space as physical zone than on space as aura: "atmosphere" is the corona at the

---

<sup>30</sup> "Thus, too, delight in the sublime in nature is only *negative* (whereas that in the beautiful is *positive*): that is to say it is a feeling of imagination by its own act depriving itself of its freedom by receiving a final determination in accordance with a law other than that of its empirical employment. In this way it gains an extension and a might greater than that which it sacrifices. But the ground of this is concealed from it, and in its place it *feels* the sacrifice or deprivation, as well as its cause, to which it is subjected" (§29, 120-121). In the Kantian system, both the mathematically and dynamically sublime are possible only through the imagination's willingness to sacrifice its autonomy; this sacrifice reveals that true sublimity is housed in the workings of the mind, not in the objects or phenomena of the physical world.

fringe of space, the connotation which, halo-like, “rings” a place. Consequently, it is not an unqualified and abstract spatiality which interests Warhol, but a situated and specific locus (in Michel de Certeau’s lexicon, not a map but an itinerary or tour).<sup>31</sup> For Warhol, the concrete takes precedence over the abstract: the immanence of his objects is the only source of their transcendence. Perhaps this state of affairs becomes the reason why objects threaten him with annihilation: in other words, because his objects are so full of themselves as to, in true Sartrean fashion, reveal consciousness as a *néant* waiting to be filled by an *être*, they inspire a post-consumptive revulsion. All-object, just as Warhol is “All Woman,” they stand against consciousness as hostile entities waiting to assault it with material excess and sensory short-circuiting.<sup>32</sup> Thus even when objects are collected, and enter into a relationship of intimacy with Warhol, or are created, and enter into a relationship of intentionality, they still present his psyche with the palpable threat of its own loss. And so the “Girl of the Year” becomes the “box-of-the-month” or Time Capsule, each appearing upon the scene of human relations only to be forced to exit it *toute de suite*. For Warhol, the “too-muchness” of the world demands engagement, even though he is only able to enjoy its excrescence through immediate relinquishment. Aesthetically, we pass from problems of superficiality to superfluity, from the radical

---

<sup>31</sup> For de Certeau, the map represents an abstract order organizing topological space, while the itinerary represents what takes place when the human traveler makes particular use of topological space. Through the “pedestrian speech act,” the flâneur regresses “map” to its origins in “tour.” This development makes possible the existence of *delinquency*. See his “Spatial Stories” in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California, 1988, 115-130).

<sup>32</sup> “Drella” is not Warhol’s only sobriquet. In *a, a novel*, Lucky jokes that A.W. stands for “All Woman”: “For Heaven’s sake, you can take your thing out and...(you should maybe we should) How big it was...see if you can. (*Laughter.*) Wait, I’ve gotta mark this A.W. Oh my, A... Yes. Oh my crud, A.W. stands for Andy Warhol too. Didn’t you know that? No, I just got—(*Laughter.*) It also means “all woman.” And “all witch.” (38).

thinness of the painterly, cinematic and literary to the obscene fecundity of mundane objects and their world. Like it or not, objects persist.

In the end, what results is an aesthetics of recycling, a desire to waste nothing by using and re-using all available space:

I think about people eating and going to the bathroom all the time, and I wonder why they don't have a tube up their behind that takes all the stuff they eat and recycles it back into their mouth, regenerating it, and then they'd never have to think about buying food or eating it. And they wouldn't even have to see it—it wouldn't even be dirty. If they wanted to, they could artificially color it on the way back in. Pink  
(*Philosophy*, 146).

Here, love is not merely a pink cake—the rosiness of excreted materials being refashioned into newly ingestible foodstuffs also qualifies as amorous. In Warhol's world, physical principles of conservation overdetermine how objects are to be used; like the laws of thermodynamics, they legislate waste. No space or species can be made extinct. This desire to obviate any and all trash plays itself out repeatedly in Warhol's campiness, which, like all campiness, necessarily involves the recuperation, recirculation and resuscitation of dead or denigrated cultural products. Yet the wish for a pink tube of purified waste transcends the mere impulse to take pleasure in the failings of another era (i.e., the will-to-camp), while also superseding the dream of radical disposability (the box-of-the-month): in short, the fantasy of the pink tube traces the activities of giving, getting, spending, exchanging, and making back to the body itself, the original source of the *quid pro quo*. The biological loop envisioned by Warhol obtains an existential primacy over other eco-loops (specifically, the

circuits of camp appropriation and waste management); it represents them in a more basic and essential form. This loop provides an answer to the anxieties of Burke and Kant, while also constituting a strategy for coping with urban perceptual streaming (Danto's problem).

In the end, what Warhol wants is to become a "space artist," or an artist who fills space with as much art as possible. Replacing quality with quantity, the space artist reduces the masterpiece to a formula and subjects that formula to the mechanism of mass production:

When Picasso died I read in a magazine that he had made four thousand masterpieces in his lifetime and I thought, "Gee, I could do that in a day." So I started. And then I found out, "Gee, it takes more than a day to do four thousand pictures." You see, the way I do them, with my technique, I really thought I could do four thousand in a day. And they'd all be masterpieces because they'd all be the same painting. And I started and I got up to about five hundred and then I stopped. But it took more than a day, I think it took a month. So at five hundred a month, it would have taken me about eight months to do four thousand masterpieces—to be a "space artist" and fill up spaces that I don't believe should be filled up anyway. It was disillusioning for me, to realize it would take me that long (*Philosophy*, 148).

The death of the ultimate masterpieces machine, Pablo Picasso, leaves a vacancy Warhol rushes to fill—despite the fact that becoming a "space machine" will only serve to augment Warhol's uneasiness at filling the world with supernumerary pieces of junk. From Warhol's perspective, all objects are dreck, whether they are culled from the world of art or kitsch; the mere phenomenon of objecthood sparks Warhol's *nausée*, not the differentiation of objects into various classes (art, kitsch) or their

being sorted according to taxonomies. Consequently, both art and kitsch are traceable back to their metaphysical existence as Kantian *ding-an-sich*, and as such render him apprehensive and discomfited in and of their undifferentiated and unqualified thingness. To be a space artist is to join in the commodity frenzy of the culture industry, to play the game of flexible accumulation by giving the world more stuff to accumulate in its various private spaces (the museum, the home, the gallery, the shopping center) and to dump in its public venues (the street, the landfill).

Participating in the hysteria of overproduction, Warhol finds himself conflicted: if the primary task of an artist is to fill space through the generation of aesthetic objects, yet the primary task of the human being is to find a way to drain the world's excess and to recycle it, then there exists no existential answer to the quandary of what he is to do regarding the production and consumption of objects. Danto, Burke and Kant have each explored similar terrain, but with different results. Danto's question of how to break down the perceptual streaming of urban sprawl, Burke's correlation of artificial infinity with terror, and Kant's identification of a mathematically sublime provide three responses. Ultimately, the plastic inevitability of kitsch answers the question of excessive objecthood. The utter irrelevance of object taxonomies causes all products to be lumped together into one undifferentiated mass of matter.

Repulsive yet enticing, this material sludge bathes consciousness in its luscious filth.

### 1.3 The POMO Tingle: Brillo ↔ Brillo

*A: You take some chocolate...and you take  
two pieces of bread...and you put the candy  
in the middle and you make a sandwich of it.  
And that would be cake*

(Andy Warhol, *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, “Art,” 174).

#### **Kitsch Fulfillment**

As I have indicated in 1.2, the ambivalence with which Warhol regards sublimity gives his work the *élan vital* and ebullience that makes it the gateway to postmodernism: ambivalent with respect to two of the more dominant and influential ways historically used to formulate sublimity, (1) the incarnational, proto-Buddhist tradition of immanent transcendence, and (2) the Burkean tradition of the sadomasochistic pleasure associated with fears of self-preservation. The selfhood produced along with the work of art proper is involuted by Warhol, whose performativity culminates in a proliferation of selves challenging concepts of “naturalness,” novelty, originality and longevity. Replacing the sincere, dramatic self of the Romantics and moderns and the id-assaulted self of Freud with the unnatural, kitschy, playful, histrionic self of Pop and post-Pop, Warhol subjects selfhood to a late capitalist makeover. Central to Warhol’s revision of selves and works of art in accord with principles of bricolage, pastiche and irony is the movement from mundanity to sublimity and back again—i.e. the Feuerbachian trajectory of self-symbolization as elucidated by Arthur Danto. The parenthetical subtitle of Warhol’s quintessential work *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)* makes this

oscillation abundantly clear: the movement to and from sublimity constitutes the nerve-center of Warhol's works, personalities and performances. This frottage-like "to-and-fro" movement can be read as a constitutive pulsation in Warhol's thought, whether the path be from fullness to emptiness, art to trash, or celebrity to nonentity. At one level, in *Philosophy*, A and B denote people:

I wake up and call B.  
B is anybody who helps me kill time.  
B is anybody and I'm nobody. B and I.  
I need B because I can't be alone. Except when I sleep.  
Then I can't be with anybody.  
I wake up and call B.  
"Hello."  
"A? Wait and I'll turn off the TV. And pee. I took a  
dehydration pill and they make me pee every fifteen minutes (5).

A parade of anonymous and faceless B's populate *Philosophy*; they fluidly pass into and out of one another without consequence—although the one "B" to receive most attention is Brigid Polk, the Duchess; she is the closest a B comes to approaching an A.<sup>1</sup> Warhol, A, passes from B to B just to kill time and combat the boredom and loneliness he always claims to feel and which telephones, tape recorders, television sets and other prostheses/automata help him to alleviate: he is a machine craving the company of machines, an automaton-loving automaton. One B is as good as another; like objects, they are only so much undifferentiated matter. A B is anyone whose voice emanates from the telephone receiver as a reassurance that two people are linked in conversation, however inattentive to one another they may be—a zero

---

<sup>1</sup> On the point of Brigid Berlin Polk's celebrity, see Vincent and Shelly Dunn Fremont's 2001 film *Pie in the Sky—The Brigid Berlin Story*. In this film, Brigid passes from B to A, while giving her audience a glimpse at the A/B tension as this gradient infused her creative and personal relationship with Andy Warhol. In the New Year's 1982 edition of *Andy Warhol's TV*, Warhol lists among resolutions like "chew more gum, get more X-rays, try to take more planes" the revelatory "Be nicer to Brigid Berlin."

degree of dialogue resonant with other moments of failed or non-communication within the Warholian catalogue (for example, Mary Woronov's refusal to engage Marie Mencken in *The Chelsea Girls*' "Gerard Malanga Story"). Superstars and supercommodities are Bs; we pass from one B to another as we move through capitalist time, as we entertain ourselves and satiate our need for the expendable. As sentient commodity fetishes, Bs blur their boundaries. Warhol's pseudo-democratic impulse results in social liquefaction.

Although "A" and "B" denote participants in what are mostly telephone chats, the expression "From A to B and Back Again" comes to mean substantively more than the mere conversational movement from A to B to B to A. Metaphorically, it refers to the presumably infinite aesthetic movement from mundanity to sublimity to mundanity to sublimity which Warhol's work effects, the fact that this vibration knows no limit or end.<sup>2</sup> To borrow the phrase that Duchamp used to describe his chef d'oeuvre *The Large Glass*, Warhol's work is "definitively unfinished" with respect to the determination of its stance toward sublimity, which it at once embraces and rejects: a far cry, for example, from Percy and Mary Shelley's sublimities, which, as in his attraction to Mont Blanc, does not waver, or, as in Doctor Frankenstein's

---

<sup>2</sup> Warhol's use of conversation recalls the use Blake makes of conversation in *Jerusalem*, which ends when the Four Zoas are able to converse and through conversation to restore a lost harmony to the world: "And they conversed together in Visionary forms dramatic which bright/ Redounded from their Tongues in thunderous majesty..." (Plate 98, 28-29). See *Jerusalem* in David V. Erdman's *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake* (New York: Doubleday, 1988). The use that Richard Rorty makes of conversation in the concluding chapter to *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980) retains the Blakean notion that conversation is salvific. Here, philosophy is recast as "kibitzing" (389-394). De-communicating conversation—and Habermas' communicative reason as set forth in his *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*—Warhol sets conversation up as a futile endeavor through which information may or may not be disclosed and, if disclosed, attended to. Blake's and Rorty's faith in conversation is something I doubt as well. As Warhol points out, the failures of conversation are the most interesting and telling moments within communication.

repulsion to his monster, resonates at a continuous intensity. Ironing out the sublime gives Warhol's work the aesthetic edge of openness; its indeterminacy with respect to sublimity makes it an indifferent cypher. Asking nothing, Warhol becomes the blank screen on whose smooth exterior we project our own aesthetic desires: his passively aggressive and Socratic personality has the effect of reflecting people back onto themselves, revealing and setting in relief their motives for wanting certain pieces of knowledge (a negative epistemology). The move from mundanity to sublimity, from the A of Campbell's Soup to the B of transubstantiated Soup ectoplasm, is an "unstable" phenomenon in the word's radioactive sense: there is no guarantee that one's aesthetic movements will terminate in sublimity, just as there is no guarantee that they will terminate in mundanity. Rather, the uncertainty of the aesthetic trajectory destabilizes Warhol's works; charging them, it produces excitement, titillation. We are thus at quite a distance from Edmund Burke's fear of annihilation in the face of nature, John Dennis' "absent terrible object," or Kant's subjective yet consensual (and, hence, antinomous) faculty of taste.<sup>3</sup> We are also at a significant remove from Longinus' idea of a sublimity synonymous with eloquence, and of Nicolas Boileau's as a sublimity verging on the experience of rape.<sup>4</sup> Warhol's ironic

---

<sup>3</sup> See John Dennis' 1704 essay "The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry" in Andrew Ashfield's and Peter de Bolla's *The Sublime: A Reader in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1996) for Dennis' discussion of the role played by the "absent terrible object" in the experience of sublimity. For Dennis, the "present terrible object" would not permit the sort of *epoché* necessary for the experience of sublimity: "For an absent object can never be set before the eye in a true light, unless it be shown in violent agitation of spirit, and that sudden agitation surprises the soul, and gives it less time to reflect; and at the same time causes the impressions that the objects make to be so deep, and their traces to be so profound, that it makes them in a manner as present to us, as if they really were before us" (39).

<sup>4</sup> Published in the first century A.D., Longinus' *Peri Hupsous* defines sublimity as a rhetorical mode; roughly translated as "lofty speech" or "eloquence," Longinus' sublimity, or *hupsous* (modern spelling: *ipsos*) inspires transport in its reader. In 1674, Nicolas Boileau translated the work into French, appending an influential Préface filled with his own reflections on sublimity. Most famous among these reflections is Boileau's analogy of sublimity as rape or ravishment: "Il se reste plus, pour

stance toward virtually everything, including irony, sets him up as a point of zero-knowledge from which no answer will ever issue.<sup>5</sup> In fact, his works will only be a riddle for people who see pop culture as an aesthetic conundrum demanding an answer. For someone like Arthur Danto there will be no conundrum, only failures; for someone like Theodor Adorno or Max Horkheimer, there will only be a cultural inferno. For myself, who sees kitsch as deeply problematic, there will emerge the problem of how to account for the aesthetic instability of Warhol's works with respect to the category of the sublime. Viewing kitsch as not mere cultural garbage or an antithesis to *kultur*, I marvel at the use Warhol makes of trash; transcending even Duchamp, he is the first to grasp the full potential of what high art abjects and deems unworthy of contemplation. This current he never ceases to tap.

In the vast majority of his work, Warhol is preoccupied with problematizing, complicating and frustrating easy solutions to the problem of aesthetic transport within capitalism, an economic arrangement which at first appraisal might seem to make transport or even *aisthesis* unthinkable. It is for this reason that bell hooks in *Black Looks*' "Eating the Other" identifies capitalist culture in the United States as fundamentally *anhedonic*, or insensitive to pleasure (26). Yet Warhol's *Philosophy* raises this issue most acutely. Specifically, the book's penultimate chapter, aptly

---

finir cette préface, que de dire ce que Longin entend par sublime; car, comme il écrit de cette manière après Cécilius, qui avoit presque employé tout son livre à montrer ce que c'est que le sublime, il n'a pas cru devoir rebattre une chose qui n'avoit été déjà que trop discutée par un autre. Il faut donc savoir que par sublime, Longin n'entend pas ce que les orateurs appellant le style sublime, mais cet extraordinaire et ce merveilleux qui frappe dans le discours, et qui fait qu'on ouvrage enlève, ravit, transporte" (442). As such, Boileau renders the sublime sexual and biological, while effecting its transfer from rhetorics to aesthetics. My source for Longinus is G.M.A. Grube's translation *On Great Writing (On the Sublime)* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1957). For Boileau, I have used his *Œuvres Complètes* (Paris: French and European Publications, 1966).

<sup>5</sup> In the context of Warhol's irony, I mention John Waters' 1998 film *Pecker*, which ends with a call on the part of the art elite for "The end of irony!" The meanings of this exclamation for postmodern culture are many; in short, the end of irony could spell the end of an era, and as such begs the question of just what exactly lies on the far side of irony.

titled “The Tingle,” contains a vividly dramatized example of what happens in postmodern aesthetics when the mundane and the sublime are not only indeterminate, but actually resist determination. Refusing to remain in its respective place, kitsch extrudes itself from an oblivion it replaces and sublates without looking back (*the* postmodern mutation): and so the *objet de kitsch* (the Empire State Building in Warhol’s film *Empire*, for example) succeeds the object of art or nature (the Alps of the Romantics) as sublime object. In other words, “The Tingle” presents the reader with a challenge: “I dare you to find me capable of aesthetic transport.” While this dare is part and parcel of the history of art beginning with Romanticism, and not, for example, Neoclassicism, in Warhol a perverse twist appears. For while it is not difficult to aestheticize the criminal, the insane, the incestuous or the diabolical, all of which are extreme, marginalized and prohibited phenomena, or awesome feats and features of nature, which both dazzle the human subject while threatening it with ontological erasure, aestheticizing kitsch doesn’t take place easily. A vacuous, insipid, “included” phenomenon, which, unlike nature, does not on the surface possess the power to annihilate, kitsch wields a surprising power. And while the kitschiness of Warhol’s paintings and Superstars will meet us half-way, the utter emptiness of “The Tingle” will not compromise. Reading and interpreting this chapter was a problem even for me, who can aestheticize anything in the blink of any eye. Second only to some of the sound films, like *Tarzan and Jane Regained...Sort of* (1964) or *Lonesome Cowboys* (1967) for the aesthetic problems it presents, this chapter of Warhol’s career makes manifest the problems besetting anyone who wishes to install kitsch as the new sublimity.<sup>6</sup> What to do with this aesthetically

---

<sup>6</sup> I find Warhol’s silent films more amenable to aesthetic transport than his “talkies”: his silent films

shoddy class of objects occupying the same slots as those held by privileged objects of nature and culture in other centuries remains unclear, open-ended. Flirting with boredom throughout his entire career, Warhol produces in “The Tingle” something which puts even the hardcore Pop aesthete to the test. In the final wash, I have been able to locate a potent species of sublimity here, although the lexical act of reading each word of “The Tingle” tempted me to scrap the sublimity argument and argue that in Warhol there is no movement beyond the ennui and mundanity which artists throughout Romanticism have sought to vanquish through their objects and personalities: such is the difficulty of recording *in toto* the movements of the world.<sup>7</sup> A poetics of total recall can only overwhelm—a consequence both immensely pleasurable and completely exhausting. As the following discussion will clarify, “The Tingle” discloses an aesthetic pulse maintaining in the same thought both the mundane and the sublime without the one sublating or “negativizing” (Hegel’s favorite participle) the other. The Tingle’s “both/and” structure guarantees the vital instability, causing sublimity to be recast as perpetual motion machine.

---

facilitate immersion in the object, while the sound films are too distracting. Yet in the end, each genre in Warhol produces its respective sublimity: a silent film like *Empire* allows the hollow space of consciousness to be filled completely with the immanently transcendent object, and a sound film, like *Lonesome Cowboys*, shreds consciousness to bits with its multiple demands on attention. Even the “voiceover film,” like *Tarzan and Jane Regained...Sort of*, asks too much of me; invariably, I drift.

<sup>7</sup> The secret of a text like Warhol’s *a* or *Philosophy* is that each hides the traces of the editing process, coming off as maximally and magically immanent (it fills to the point of rupture with an uncontainable present). For example, *a* does not in actuality represent what it purports to represent: the full day of an amphetamine freak. The book breaks at Chapter 12/ 2, when the tape runs put. Furthermore, the book’s many typos point to the intervention of typists who are also interpreters. Finally, although each chapter does theoretically represent one side of a cassette tape (they are numbered accordingly—1/ 1 and 1/ 2, for example), some tapes are missing (there is no 15/ 2), while others, like 15/ 1, appear to contain too little material.

## Amphetamin Co-pilots<sup>8</sup>

As a chapter, “The Tingle” is placed after meditations on love, beauty, fame, work, time, death, economics, atmosphere, success, art and titles, and before a final one on Underwear Power or “What I do on Saturday When My Philosophy Runs Out”: i.e. go to Macy’s Herald Square to purchase some new Jockey Classic Briefs.<sup>9</sup> Along the way, we witness Warhol’s ceaseless consumption of people, artists, works of art, machines, and, ultimately, sartorial unmentionables. Each meditation is housed in a discrete chapter. The chapters which precede “The Tingle” are all concerned with formulating Warhol’s aesthetics. Written anecdotally, they use a first-person narrative structure to recount both exemplary and banal autobiographical incidents in the making of a Pop icon. Like Warhol’s productions in painting and cinema, *Philosophy* is a joint venture between himself and a productive other—in this instance, Pat Hackett.<sup>10</sup> In the Introduction to Warhol’s *Diaries*, Hackett, initially hired by Warhol as a typist while she was an undergraduate at Barnard College, explains her methods:

---

<sup>8</sup> According to a German article (no credits) in *Time Capsule 7*, *a*’s original title was *Cock*, and its working title was *Speed Kills, Amphetamin Co-pilots, UPSS, AII, 24 Hours* (hence my retention of the misspelling). With Ondine, his literal amphetamine-infused co-pilot, Warhol realizes in print his cinematic dream of a 24-hour work of art. With co-pilots like Brigid Berlin, Pat Hackett, and Bob Colacello speeding him up, Warhol achieves new life as a writer.

<sup>9</sup> “Men’s Sunglasses led to Men’s Scarves which led to Men’s Pajamas and then—then!—Men’s Underwear. I quickly found the brand I usually use, Jockey Classic Briefs. They were three for five dollars which didn’t seem too inflationary. I read the label on the plastic bag they came in, just to make sure they hadn’t changed any of their famous ‘Comfort Features’—‘Exclusive Tailoring for Proper Fit to Support a Man’s Needs; Contoured Designed Arch Gives added Comfort No Gaps; Support Waistband in Smoother Fitted Heat Resistant; Stronger Longer Lasting ‘V’ No Chafe Leg Openings; Soft Rubber at Either Thigh Only; Highly Absorbent 100 Per Cent Highly Combed Cotton” (*Philosophy*, 232-233). The automaton reveals his body; for me, at least, considering Warhol’s flesh seems almost obscene. That he even has a body shocks me. Buying the machine shtick, I find an epidermis where I thought I might encounter only metal and wires.

<sup>10</sup> Bob Colacello and Brigid Berlin also count as productive others in the genesis of *Philosophy*; 2.3, “Machinehood,” documents their involvement.

On the first book, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)*, I did eight separate interviews with Andy on the basis of which I wrote chapters 1 through 8 and chapter 10. Then, using materials from conversations Andy had taped between himself and Brigid Berlin, I wrote the introductory chapter and chapters 9, 11, 12, 13 and 14. It was the first major project Andy and I had worked on together, and after the book was published, in 1975, he asked me to co-author the second book with him—his memoirs of the sixties, which we decided to call *Popism* (xv).

Although Hackett (and Berlin) has such a formative role in *Philosophy*, she is technically not the book's co-author; her only appearance occurs on the book's acknowledgments page: "To Pat Hackett, for extracting and redacting my thoughts so intelligently." Drawing out and putting in motion Warhol's essential ideas, Hackett hovers over the text like a benevolent Tinkerbell. Following Keats' and Breton's programs, writing finally achieves full automation and negative capability. Chapter 14, "The Tingle," is hers—but she owns it only as an intermediary.

When Warhol had first published his first literary endeavor, *a*, a novel in 1968, this product had also been a "conversation book"; transcribed from taped encounters among himself, Ondine, Dorothy Dean, The Sugar Plum Fairy, and others, *a* had its origins outside the sphere of writing. Like *Philosophy*'s "The Tingle," this novel is also an experiment in total recall; as one reviewer commented, Warhol "made you accept that 'true to life' could be a doubtful sort of accolade...he made you acknowledge that, in a sense, art cheated—it made life interesting."<sup>11</sup> In her Introduction to the *Diaries*, Hackett explains Warhol's generic literary process: "His

---

<sup>11</sup> I have taken the review of *a* quoted in the text from Sally Bearman's review, stored in Time Capsule 1. No credits are given regarding date of publication or where the article appeared.

first ‘novel,’ *a*, published in 1968, actually had been a literary experiment— transcripts of conversations that he’d taped of his superstars and friends as they operated in the amphetamine and pansexual subculture of New York were ‘transcribed’ by amateur typists who, guessing at words and phrases when they couldn’t be certain, perpetrated technical and conceptual mistakes galore that Andy then made sure were reproduced, typo for typo, as the published text” (xxi). Multiplying and magnifying error, those processing the text make its final form the product of chance operations and contingency, inspiring one to wonder about which moments of Warhol’s next major textual opus, *Philosophy*, represent Hackett’s own guesses, mistakes, or improvisations. In an article appearing in the *L.A. Herald Examiner* on November 17, 1968, Warhol commented wryly about the typists responsible for “extracting” and “redacting” his thoughts in *a*: “I have two more books projected. One will be another novel, about two girls. It will be more abstract than this one—and we’ve found a faster typer. For the third book, I thought of hiring a detective and having him follow a real person and then use his report for the book. I’ve seen some of these and they’re fascinating.”<sup>12</sup> *POPism* and the posthumous *Diaries* are the result of further collaboration with the evidently “faster typer” Pat Hackett. The Foreword to *POPism* reads: “This is my personal view of the Pop phenomenon in New York in the 1960s. In writing it, Pat Hackett and I have reconstructed the decade, starting in ’60 when I began to paint my first Pop canvases.” Reconstructing not only the 60s, Hackett prepares the Warhol 70s and 80s for public display as well through her work on *Philosophy*, the *Diaries* and *Andy Warhol’s Party Book*. Given Warhol’s love of mechanization, it makes perfect sense

---

<sup>12</sup> The article mentioned is housed in Time Capsule 7.

that he should install transcription as the literary analogue to the silkscreen.

Operating the transcribing machine, Hackett tailors Warhol, preparing him for public consumption. She atomizes him, filtering his thoughts and words as if they were a fragrance.<sup>13</sup>

In the New Years 1982 episode of *Andy Warhol's TV* mentioned earlier in this chapter, Warhol also resolved to “be thankful to Pat Hackett,” who “pushed me on the dance floor.”<sup>14</sup> Making Warhol’s texts dance, Hackett becomes their Gerard Malanga, Ronnie Cutrone, or Paul Morrissey: without her, they would not exist as such. Warhol’s literary career literally ends with Hackett:

Got into bed and Wilfredo called and then Sam called and then I fell asleep. But I woke up at 6:30 and I couldn’t get back to sleep, so I took some Valium and a Seconal and two aspirin, and I was sleeping so heavily that I didn’t wake up when PH called at nine o’clock. And when I didn’t answer she got scared because that had never happened before, so she called on the other line and Aurora answered in the kitchen, and PH made her come up to my bedroom to shake me but I wish she’d just let me sleep (Tuesday, February 17, 1987).

Redacting Warhol’s physical body, Hackett, via Aurora, shakes him into consciousness—a role she performed repeatedly with his textual body. Yet books

---

<sup>13</sup> “And she (Gloria Swanson) started saying, ‘I smell terrible fumes. I have to go to the window to get away from them. Where are they coming from? Check your stove. I have a pretty good nose and I know there are fumes escaping.’ And I just knew it was the perfume I had on that she was smelling. It was jasmine from Shelly Marks. PH and I are doing research for a new perfume line and I was trying it out. And so I didn’t want to go near Gloria. I went into the bathroom and tried to wash it off, and then for the rest of the night I stayed about four feet away from her even when she was trying to talk to me” (*Diaries*, Monday, January 1, 1979).

<sup>14</sup> The Tuesday, November 24, 1981 diary entry makes note of Warhol’s dance with Pat Hackett at Studio 54: “And then I heard that Jed was there so I guess he saw me dancing. He could have gotten me dancing, all those years, that’s something he could have done for me. And I wasn’t drunk at all, either. I was just miserable because things don’t turn out like you expect them to. I was in a sort of horrible mood. I had a sip of champagne, that’s all. And then I danced with Gaetana and with São and with PH, and I just never knew I could do it before.” Expanding his somatic possibilities, Hackett achieves the impossible: she moves Warhol.

like *Philosophy*, *POPism*, the *Diaries* and *Andy Warhol's Party Book* are not hers, but Warhol's; as in painting and cinema, Warhol's authority survives the death of the author. Pruning the words recorded by Warhol's wife, Hackett gives form to what otherwise would be verbal sprawl. Being editor for a project indebted to recording anything and everything that transpires in the lifeworld is a daunting task, but through Hackett's cutting, splicing, erasing, fluffing and organizing decades crystallize, characters emerge, and an autobiography surfaces. In *Andy Warhol*, Koestenbaum identifies Hackett as a midwife: "Hackett had the uncanny knack of sounding like Warhol. To compose *The Philosophy*, she brought him a series of questions—rigorous as a philosophy seminar—and led the master through meditations on work, space, time, and death. She served inquiries, and Andy lobbed back answers; sometimes she filled in the blanks. Andy once told her, after she'd come up with an arresting insight, 'You should make that into my language, that's really great'" (180). Moments of *tendresse* between Warhol and Hackett testify to her importance: "Went to the auction of Joan Crawford's costume jewelry. Saw PH there bidding on a huge pink necklace and when it went over her limit she dropped out, but then I did some more and got it and gave it to her" (*Diaries*, Thursday, January 19, 1978). As the ensuing words of the entry clarify, this tenderness was mutual: "She was so grateful she took me down to the Village to Sixth Avenue near Waverly and showed me a secret store she'd discovered on the second floor where a man sells all the Diors and Balenciagas that belonged to his sister who's now dead. It was the greatest place and I bought about five dresses." Warhol's secret, and also a secret Warhol, Hackett brings us Warhol's tingle.

## Nothing Special

Beginning with a preface aptly titled “How Andy Puts His Warhol On,” the string of meditations in *Philosophy* fleshes out a definition of art in which the work of art is not separate from or opposed to the world of Coca-Cola Bottles, but becomes something ephemeral, expendable and expensive. Nor is it separate from the world of subjects and personalities, which for Warhol are the ultimate objects of art within capitalism, whose stunningly hypertrophied pop culture has absorbed even art and what in other times functioned as art’s reservoir, nature. The irony of the situation is precisely that art, which in the Romantic era had come to define itself against the progress effected by the Industrial Revolution, has finally come full circle to accept a position within pop culture, arch-nemesis of both nature and culture (this despite the fact that, in his sonnet “Steamboats, Viaducts, and Railways,” Wordsworth heralds products and infrastructure of industry as potential future sources of beauty).<sup>15</sup> That Andy puts his Warhol on is essential to understanding art’s new role within late capitalism. Hiding behind a celebrity persona, Warhol turns himself into a Pop object fit for consumption by a wide range of consumers. From the utterly uninitiated art *ignorante* to the snobby art *cognoscente*, diverse populations are able to consume Warhol’s art and personality because they are designed for easy consumption across the board. For Warhol, art *is* love, beauty, fame, work, economics, atmosphere, titles.

---

<sup>15</sup> “In spite of all that beauty may disown/ In your harsh features, Nature doth embrace/ Her lawful offspring in Man’s art; and Time,/ Pleased with your triumphs o’er his brother Space,/ Accepts from your bold hands the proffered crown/ Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer sublime” (10-14). This sonnet may be found in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Volume 2* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1993).

Taking a cue from the 1950s post-war American consumption of Pop commodities and wishing to distance himself from the hypermasculine angst and turmoil of the Abstract Expressionists, Warhol reinvents art as popular culture, which is, as my previous chapter indicated, to reinvent it as kitsch. The Dadaists and Surrealists played many games with kitsch—automatism, frottage, aiding Readymades.<sup>16</sup> Still, they never intended to validate pop culture or to pass art and kitsch through a chiasm. And while they played many games with personality and situations—prefiguring the media whore—they were never able to perfect their personae to the degree that Warhol perfected his, perhaps because the technology was not in place for any true superstars to emerge, but also because, though Arthur Cravan sail away into the nothingness of the Pacific or Marcel Duchamp impersonate Rose Sélavy or Salvador Dali curl his moustache to the high heavens, they could not have appreciated or understood mass culture. Warhol recognized society's insatiable demand for stars by becoming one himself and by using his art to increase the world's kitsch content.<sup>17</sup> As Superstar Ultra Violet phrased it in her memoir *Famous for Fifteen Minutes*, he was the "King of Kitsch."

*Philosophy* is Warhol's attempt to write something comparable to Breton's *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, Marinetti's *Manifestoes of Futurism* or Olson's

---

<sup>16</sup> Marcel Duchamp differentiates between a Readymade and a Readymade Aided. The Readymade is the unmanipulated *objet trouvé*, such as *In Advance of the Broken Arm* (1915), while the Readymade Aided is a found object subjected to minimal manipulation, such as *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1919).

<sup>17</sup> Quentin Crisp is correct when he comments (in private conversation) that the world is absolutely brimming with stars, that there has been a veritable star explosion ever since Warhol identified celebrity as the century's great ontological and existential problem. Everyone is a star, whether or not they are stars: hence the "Realness" factor, the performative, "as-if" dimension of selfhood of the *Paris Is Burning* Ballwalkers and *Legendary Children* (Livingston, 1991).

“Projective Verse.”<sup>18</sup> Rejecting the authoritative tone, aphoristic style and overt masculinity that documents like these employ as rhetorical devices, Warhol gives the postmodern world something like a *Manifesto of Pop* which, as a pop manifesto, must necessarily be something like an un-manifesto: a lukewarm, pluralist, wishy-washy statement of aesthetic beliefs far removed from the grand historicity of the Hegelian *Wissenschaft*. Furthermore, *Philosophy* diverges from other notorious manifestoes in that it is a collaborative work. As a Pop Manifesto, Warhol’s *Philosophy* thus must dispense with the essentialism, rigidity and determinism of previous aesthetic manifestoes, which, from Aristotle’s *Poetics* and onward, assert one indubitable claim after another, leaving less room for readers to enter and play.<sup>19</sup> Telling the one story that art should follow in order to succeed as art, many of the manifestoes preceding Warhol’s *Philosophy* are historical, grand, in many instances apocalyptic, accounts of the way all art is and must be—even if, as in the example of Breton’s *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, or Percy Shelley’s *Defence of Poetry*, the only program for art is that it be non-programmatic.<sup>20</sup> Consequently, Warhol and Hackett choose a loose, anecdotal style allowing Warhol to formulate his own views on art without making any grand and sweeping proclamations about all works of art. Telling one story after another—

---

<sup>18</sup> Outside the genre of the art manifesto, *Philosophy* finds other analogues—for example, the celebrity memoir, the “as told to” bio (Cher’s *The First Time*), or the Bestseller. *Philosophy* must be read in the context of trash literature as well, since otherwise there is no hope of gleaning the book’s superficialities.

<sup>19</sup> While Aristotle’s *Poetics* is technically not a manifesto, I treat it as such in order to disclose its imperative core. Like a manifesto, it provides “an ought”; unlike a manifesto, it does not tie that “ought” to a revolutionary project.

<sup>20</sup> One notable exception to the programmaticity of poetic and artistic manifestoes is Frank O’Hara’s “Personism: A Manifesto.” Setting up a conversational and amorous model for poetic production, O’Hara creates not so much of an anti-manifesto as a manifesto which has managed to escape the allure of negation (*the modernist trap*). See the *Selected Poems of Frank O’Hara* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).

de Certeau's *fabulae*, Schlegel's arabesques—Warhol allows his anecdotes to speak for themselves, to show rather than tell the way art is progressing.

Overall, Warhol's preoccupation is the status quo—not how things should take place in an ideal world, but the ways they actually transpire in realtime: “B: I wanted to make a film that showed how sad and lyrical it is for those two old ladies to be living on those rooms full of newspapers and cats. A: You shouldn't make it sad. You should just say, ‘This is how people today are doing things’” (141). Warhol eludes fixity; the postmodern tingle, or the oscillation of the work of art and the work of self between the two poles of mundanity and sublimity, can only be captured by a text which does not seek to pin it down, but is instead satisfied with isolating this oscillation and placing it on display as the symptom of an era. How people operate matters most. “The Tingle” presents kitsch at its worst because it is kitsch imitating kitsch (hence, as in the example of Jeff Koons' 1991 *Yorkshire Terriers*, art does not reference nature—a real dog—but other objects of kitsch—Hummels, Lladrós). As an un-manifesto, *Philosophy* situates itself in a tradition of such systematized declarations of what it means for art to be art, diverging from this tradition in that it manifests nothing and provides no increase in knowledge for the reader, who, as Alexander Baumgarten's original art-philosophical audience, turns to the aesthetic treatise seeking an education in taste.<sup>21</sup> In true Socratic fashion, *Philosophy* reveals nothing except that it has nothing to reveal. Like Plato, Hackett frames, edits, and

---

<sup>21</sup> Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten coined the term “aesthetics” in his 1750 treatise *Aesthetica*—hence my identification of his audience as “original” or primal. In *Hegel: Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, Michael Inwood comments: “The Latinate *aesthetica* (later translated into German as *Ästhetik*) was first used by A.G.Baumgarten (1714-62), in his *Metaphysica* (1739) and *Aesthetica* (1750)... Thus it is originally, as Baumgarten defines it, the ‘science of sensory knowledge’, but it was soon restricted to the ‘science of sensory beauty’” (98).

presents her master and mentor, whose words assume the form of maddening dialogues (both Socrates and Warhol drive his interlocutors crazy). Similarly, *Philosophy*'s effect on its reader matches the sensation one encounters at the end of Dialogues like *Meno* or *Theaetetus*: namely, one knows that one knows nothing (*Theaetetus*), or that, at most, one knows only what one has already recollectively known (*Meno*). The un-epistemology of *Philosophy* is therefore of a piece with the un-epistemology of the early Socrates, who is less interested in knowing than disavowing knowledge. As a Socratic aesthetics—that is, an ironic aesthetics unconcerned with positive epistemological results—Warhol's un-manifesto presents a mood or an atmosphere rather than enumerating exhaustive requirements for aesthetic object-hood, and in doing so obliquely arrives at what it means to be aesthetically alive under capitalism.

Taken as such, *Philosophy* moves from A to B, from B to B, from mundanity to sublimity, mundanity to mundanity, without ever making any definitive statement on where the ball will be when the roulette wheel stops spinning. Aesthetically, either possibility is equally viable, as are non-integral positions, a veritable Schrödingerian panoply of possibilities.<sup>22</sup> Making the sublime more precious than it ever had been—precious because it becomes something which may be *lost*—Warhol

---

<sup>22</sup> In 1935, physicist Erwin Schrödinger developed his famous “cat box” thought experiment. John Gribbin, in *In Search of Schrödinger's Cat* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1984), explains: “Schrödinger suggested that we should imagine a box that contains a radioactive source, a detector that records the presence of radioactive particles (a Geiger counter, perhaps), a glass bottle containing a poison such as cyanide, and a live cat. The apparatus in the box is arranged so that the detector is switched on for just long enough so that there is a fifty-fifty chance that one of the atoms in the radioactive material will decay and that the detector will release a particle. If the detector does record such an event, then the glass container is crushed and the cat dies: if not, the cat lives. We have no way of knowing the outcome of this experiment until we open the box to look inside; radioactive decay occurs entirely by chance and is unpredictable except in a statistical sense” (203). Describable as a wave equation, the cat in the box exists as a stream of probabilities until an act of measurement is made.

introduces the idea of the tingle as the quasi-physical experience of having and losing sublimity, of alternating between the two states of seeing the world as redeemed and seeing it as grossly unredeemable.<sup>23</sup> As a particle and a wave simultaneously, perhaps even a “string” or “membrane” in the parlance of physicist Brian Greene, kitsch is either the highest of the high or the lowest of the low, is paradoxically the one and the other.<sup>24</sup> For the logic of Feuerbach’s “sacramental celebration” and the Diamond Sutra demands that what is sacramentally celebrated or spiritually returned to be just as easily viewed as positively ordinary and blasé: postmodern sublimity might be missed. In short, self-symbolizing entities will only be a symbol for those persons who have come to understand the logic of self-symbolization: their nuances are easy to overlook. Such an ideology cannot properly be insulated from decay; Warhol makes virtually no effort to safeguard it from epistemological wasting, and in fact encourages confusion, misreading and semantic evacuation. Like other ideologies, Warhol’s posits a central premise from which all statements of fact may be logically deducted; unlike other ideologues, he is unconcerned with securing that central premise, which persists through absence.

---

<sup>23</sup> The aesthetics of loss I am proposing differs from the aesthetics of loss proposed by Thomas E. Yingling in *Hart Crane and The Homosexual Text: New Thresholds, New Anatomies* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990). In this text, Yingling puts forth the notion that lost objects may themselves generate sublimity, as well as the corresponding idea that “loss” itself is central to the Kantian project (as in the Imagination’s loss of its capacity to presentify). What I propose, though, is not so much an aesthetics of loss as much as an aesthetics which may be *lost*.

<sup>24</sup> In *The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), physicist Brian Greene traces the particle and the wave back to the string, which for him becomes the basic building block of a resonant universe. Hence the universe is elegant, in that it is simple: “String theory alters this picture radically by declaring that the ‘stuff’ of all matter and all forces is the *same*. Each elementary particle is composed of a single string—that is, each particle *is* a single string—and all strings are absolutely identical. Differences between the particles arise because their respective strings undergo different resonant vibrational patterns. What appears to be different elementary particles are actually different ‘notes’ on a fundamental string. The universe—being composed of an enormous number of these vibrational strings—is akin to a cosmic symphony” (146).

Warhol achieves these feats of ideological ambivalence by exploiting the principle of minimal artistic intervention that before him had culminated in Duchamp's Readymades. He exploits this creative minimalism along with the advertising stratagem of using charged images without overtly commenting on those images so as to maximize their impact. In *Famous for Fifteen Minutes*, Ultra Violet attempts to tease out an admission of Warhol's advertising savvy with respect to his 1963 electric chair paintings: "I ask Andy, 'Is there more than one manufacturer of electric chairs?' 'Gee, I don't know.' 'Are they signed the way a Thonet chair is signed?' He shrugs. 'Just a serial number.' I look again at the painting and say, 'I like it. You are upfront.' 'What do you mean?' 'The death element is obvious.' 'Gee.' 'It's honest subliminal advertising.' 'What do you mean?' 'You know Madison Avenue uses death symbols to lure the customers.' 'No, tell me'" (93). With these two principles in hand (aesthetic dissociation, the use of charged images), Warhol consistently produces works of art and bits of philosophy demanding interpretation because they are presented "uninterpreted" or "raw." For example, the electric chair paintings can either be read as a commentary on the evils of capital punishment or as its utter trivialization. Using only color to indicate attitude, Warhol crams meaning into wavelength, giving semantics completely over to the Hertz measurement (the decorator color of a Disaster canvas replaces a violent content with an interior design non-content). Complicated by the fact that Warhol insists on the superficiality and artificiality of his art and persona, the situation is that we are presented with the uninterpreted and then told not to interpret it: "If you want to know all about Andy Warhol, just look at the surface of my paintings and films and me, and

there I am. There's nothing behind it" announces the 2002 Warhol stamp advertisement (an enshrinement of his most famous 60s sound bite). The result of this prohibition is that it does not matter which way the situation resolves, for A and B are both equally desirable end-points which will reveal more about us than any content of any un-painting, un-manifesto or un-celebrity. Although this condition may very well be true of any number of works of art, Warhol's are the most devious in toying with neutrality and have thus been the most instrumental in revealing that behind every interpretation lurks a desire for that interpretation, that the act of interpretation is itself a feat of autobiography according to which a subject doesn't just objectively encounter the aesthetic truth of the *objet*, but rather makes that truth happen in order to fulfill its desire that the world turn out a certain way.<sup>25</sup> Continuing with the example of the electric chair images: my own attitudes toward capital punishment are called into play as I (or Ultra Violet) interpret the work. Its blankness places the onus of openness on me. When I see in it Julius' and Ethel Rosenberg's *tokheses*, the last to grace the chair with their presence before Warhol would burn its image onto the collective retina, my own perverse Communism bubbles to the surface; when I admire its decorator spectrum, my aestheticism triumphs.<sup>26</sup> Maxing out the post-structural moment, I read myself on the surface of the painting without first having to search for an aporia. The painting's apparent rejection of depth makes

---

<sup>25</sup> For Kant, the sublime ultimately resides in the mind; similarly, for Wolfgang Kayser in *the Grottesque in Art and Literature* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), the grotesque resides in the gaze. These positions relate to Warhol's in that they relativize aesthetic truth. Hence *kalos* inheres in a subject-object relation and is not pre-fab.

<sup>26</sup> Both the 2000 "Andy Warhol Photography" show at New York's City's ICP and the 2002 Warhol retrospective at LA's MOCA displayed the original 1953 photograph on which the Warhol electric chair paintings are based. Revealing these paintings to be a reference both to Communism and atomic warfare, the Rosenberg photograph constitutes yet another odd capitalist/Communist moment for Warhol. Chapter 2.1 develops this point further with respect to Warhol's counter-revolutionariness.

the entire surface of the painting an aporia, a portal, an inroad. As if it were made of glass.

### Of Lemons & Phantom Limbs

In *Philosophy*, each chapter begins with a quote from a conversation between Warhol and one of his Bs:

A: Should we walk? It's really beautiful out.

B: No.

A: Okay (31).

\*\*\*

B: Is that a female impersonator?

A: Of what? (41).

These snippets are for the most part minimal, bathetic and laconic. They allude to entire conversations—yet returning to them is unprofitable because chances are the master text will be just as unenlightening and undisclosing as the traces and residues those totalities have left behind. In these quotes, sentimentality is frustrated; emotion boils away into a Martian atmosphere. All but three chapters bear autobiographical epigrams; these are “Titles,” “The Tingle,” and “Underwear Power.” They do not contain conversational epigrams because they are themselves conversations reproduced in their presumable entirety (although, like *a*, they too are edited). Of these three, “The Tingle” spotlights the conversation I am presently using to illustrate mundanity/sublimity flux. Although “Titles” and “Underwear Power” contain important and aesthetically-relevant conversations—in “Titles” Warhol instructs a B

on how to terrorize people into making the errors you have gotten them to believe are theirs into desperate running jokes, while in “Underwear Power” underwear and diamonds are contrasted for their respective longevities—the conversation in “The Tingle” bears greatest relevance to the postmodern sublime.<sup>27</sup> The conversation that “The Tingle” relays is both comical and sadistic. Warhol, the passive listener, becomes barraged with a drugged-up (endorphins are also an option) Queen B’s (Brigid Polk’s) manic and exhaustive accounts of her house-keeping and hygiene rituals, presented unedited in 24 pages of run-ons and ramblings. Named after Brigid’s funny observation that current cleaning products are all using the language of the tingle—“I get the Endust out. It’s better than Old Gold or Pledge or Lemon Pledge. That’s such a farce, adding all those lemons to everything. Lemon was 1973. I think. Everything was coming up lemons. This year everything’s a ‘tingle’” (203)—this chapter more than any other in *Philosophy* presents Warhol at his most manipulative. Phoning B is part of a more elaborate ritual of “checking in” with the persons in his current coterie, of catching up on their adventures, scandals, gossip and, most importantly, the insignificant, banal and uninteresting experiences they’ve had (in fact, it is mainly during his B’s interesting moments that Warhol checks out). Checking in on this B, described by Warhol as being “a conceptual thinker from a good family” who “moved to the wrong side of the tracks” but still shows evidence of

---

<sup>27</sup> “I’d rather have jewelry,” B said.

“Why?”

“Because a diamond is forever,” B said.

“Forever what?” (241).

These are the words which close *Philosophy*; they are its last dance. For Warhol, not even that privileged object, the diamond, can remain. The riff on Marilyn Monroe is evident; underwear, not the diamond, is Warhol’s best friend. And so Marilyn ends Warhol’s aesthetics. The fag stops at the prototypical fag moment. Warhol the camp queen signs off.

her “good breeding,” Warhol stumbles upon a conversation bringing postmodern oscillation into sharper focus (200).

This sharper focus provides a vista of that very postmodern nexus of the mundane with the sublime. “Can I be redeemed?” is “The Tingle’s” question (plus: “Can I be read?”), the answer to which is yes and no, some times yet not others, maybe and maybe not, if today then not necessarily tomorrow. The trajectory Warhol’s chapter takes through the universe of cleaning rituals entails a wide range of qualifiers/descriptives. Its hygienic journey is at times informative (the Duchess thinks up tricks you’ve never dreamed of, like ripping up sexy photographs of herself into bits and flushing them down the toilet so her nosy neighbors won’t rummage through her trash and unearth the details of her love life), at times boring (no one needs to know this much information about anyone), at times exhausting (it only ends on page 24 with Warhol’s interruption “That’s okay, B. I have to go.” [225]; otherwise, it could continue for countless successive pages, a perceptual infinity), at times exhilarating (the shift from domestic rituals to more personal rituals like feminine hygiene and masturbation with a vibrator is a great *rupture*), at times absorbing, at times excluding, etc.<sup>28</sup> A lengthy quoted passage—no other will do—will perhaps illuminate the problems this text poses for philosophy and literary theory alike (not to mention pathography):

---

<sup>28</sup> For Burke, the sublime bears reference to the infinite via a connection with phenomena like “Vastness” and “Power.” See “Infinity” in his *A Philosophy Enquiry*: “Infinity has a tendency to fill the mind with that sort of delightful horror, which is the most genuine effect, the truest test of the sublime. There are scarce any things which can become the objects of our senses that are really, and in their own nature infinite. But the eye not being able to perceive the bounds of many things, they seem to be infinite, and they produce the same effects as if they were really so” (67).

“A, I’m not thinking about time, I’m thinking about DETAIL!” she roared. “I’m thinking about all the cleaning I have to do! After I finish the stationary drawer, after I vacuum all the little plain white pads and the airmail envelopes, take them all out, put them back in, I still have to do the bottom drawer, the drawer filled with pictures. There are a lot of envelopes that say ‘Miscellaneous’ in that drawer and this is one of the things I’m trying to conquer in my life, the word ‘Miscellaneous.’ It’s got to go. Because nothing is miscellaneous. So I’ve decided to take everything that’s in ‘Miscellaneous’ and put it in another file. So I take out things like ‘Releases,’ and envelopes people have sent me with a picture I sent to somebody who dies, and photographs from books, all these things. And I say ‘Do I really want all these releases?’ So I open the passages and I look. Well, I won’t save all the releases, I’ll just save the important ones. The rest I’ll throw out. I’ll get rid of a good eighth of an inch if I throw out somebody like...Lee Tallberg. Who the hell is Lee Tallberg? Rotten Rita? Well, maybe Rotten Rita I should keep. Peter Hugall...well, maybe I’ll save releases. Maybe I’ll make a book of releases. I’ll keep them in the same envelope and just have it published like it is. ‘Releases in an Envelope.’ Then I have to go through the Guarantee File. Now, there’s no point in keeping guarantees that are over the ninety-day guarantee period. So I go through the envelope and I get rid of a good inch when I throw out guarantees from 1965, you know, tape recorders and cameras, and I’ve mailed in the warranty and I save the little thing but after a year they send me an IBM card that says, ‘If you require service on any of these parts you pay \$17.00.’ Then, of course, I have my receipts for taxes for three years and each month—I keep them very neat, they’re in business envelopes—they don’t fit very well, but I keep all of 1973 in a manila file that says ‘Receipts.’ Then xeroxes of things I keep because there was a reason for me to xerox them in the first place, so there’s no reason for me to go through them. Then ‘Ideas.’ Well, the idea envelope is empty, but I might get some so I might as well keep the envelope for the file. ‘Bills to Be Paid.’ Well, actually, ‘Bills to Be Paid’ isn’t a good file to keep hidden in a drawer, so if I want to be a better housekeeper I should actually take those bills out that I might have to pay and keep them in sight.

‘Lawyer.’ Well, all the letters from the lawyer are dated and I keep them in order with the last letter that he sent me at the top. That file I’ll keep. ‘Letters to write.’ Now that’s another stupid file because there’s only one letter in it, to Heiner Friedrich and John Giorno to send back something and I know I’ll never mail it, so I’m going to throw it out and that’s about an eighth of an inch gone now. Now, ‘Carbon Copies of Letters.’ That’s a good file because they were funny letters that I wrote. ‘Possibilities for Movies.’ That’s a good file too. I haven’t thought of any yet but I’m always thinking. Now my ‘Accountant’ envelope I’m keeping. That I even add to, every time I see an article like in *New York* magazine about deducting your plants. I cut it out and put it in the file for the accountant—‘Powers of Deduction’—writing off the home office—so I’ll know for next year. ‘The Dope Lawyer.’ That’s a script. Well, there’s no reason not to save scripts. ‘School Play.’ That’s an original screenplay written in hand. Now, I’ve got a little thing of foreign coins here. I guess the only ones I should bother to save are kopeks because there’s not enough English money here, it’s all Russian money, so I’ll keep it. So that drawer’s neat” (205-207).

As the flow of this monster-quote implies, the text could literally go on forever, or at least until B runs out of oxygen, which isn’t likely; it postulates a never-ending surge. If reference to infinity is a constitutive quality of the sublime, as Burke has alleged, then “The Tingle” is surely sublime, continuing on into a hypothetical eternity in which every detail of the intramundane world is recalled in full and in which nature is reduced to the homemaker’s (here sexed as female) daily hygienic battle with germs and bacteria.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, if, as Kant posits in his notion of the mathematically

---

<sup>29</sup> The Brillo Box and “The Tingle” begin an obsession with hygiene and cleanliness evidenced in later works at Womanhouse in the 70s (e.g. Christina Rush’s *Scrubbing*), Mike Kelly’s self-portrait as a janitor (for the cover of his *Catholic Tastes* catalogue), Jeff Koons’ *Hoover Celebrities* (1981-1986) and Janine Antoni’s 1995 performance *Loving Care*, in which she dips her hair in a bucket of Loving Care hair dye and mops the floor, creating patterns which bear an uncanny resemblance to Abstract Expressionist works like those of Franz Kline. As a theme, hygiene returns in the Warhol corpus with Brigid Polk’s cleaning rampage; perhaps it begins the mania for an art of germphobia or OCD.

sublime, the sheer magnitude and/or quantity of the immeasurable catapults the mind into the throes of aesthetic transport, then B's words effect that movement by virtue of her fellow conversant's (or reader's) phenomenological inability to totalize or sum them. Moving in and out of ennui, the text emblemizes the postmodern sublime, defined by its parodic quality and constituted by the subject's move into and out of the aesthetic highs and lows resulting when objects of kitsch are elevated to the status of nature and culture. While the Romantics had set aside this space for Frankenstein's monster, for Mont Blanc, for Christabel, and for the grotesque, the omnipotent, and the nefarious, Warhol reserves it for the product of material and textual excess. For there is always the danger that one such elevated object might fall back into its mundanity in the grand style of an electron falling back from a high-energy shell to a low-energy shell (where the escaping photon disappears to remains to be determined). "The Tingle" presents the sublime's fall into a once transcended mundanity unmercifully, even jubilantly. It loves disaster.

The sublime in its Warholian formulation thus differs from the sublime in its theological or philosophical formulations in that, as a parody or ironic copy of itself, it can be interpreted as either mundanity or sublimity: this chance constitutes the risk of kitsch. Warhol's sublime differs from Kant's sublime as well in that Warhol's resists the efforts of epistemology to trace its intensity back to intranoumenal conflict and miraculous epistemic resolution.<sup>30</sup> The postmodern tingle corresponds to the

---

<sup>30</sup> Intranoumenal (the clash of various faculties of knowing/perceiving) conflict is not one of Warhol's priorities, nor is intrapsychic (id versus ego versus superego) conflict; in his coteries, selfhood becomes that which is readable on the surface of things, not that which struggles for epistemological territory, or that which bubbles up from an unconscious netherworld to wreak havoc at the level of surface. I am indebted to Michele Wallace for getting me to see this stance as an instantiation of Baudrillard's "ecstasy of communication": i.e., the bliss that results from cramming all matter into the surface. See her *Invisibility Blues: From Pop to Theory* (London: Verso, 1990). If the id, on the side

tension the object surfs in its two-fold existence as vulgar kitsch and *haute objet*. We tingle as we come to realize that sublimity is stretched to the limit, that self-hood and art-hood are all the things kitsch has been faulted for being: ephemeral, dispensable, unnatural, superfluous, excrescent, evanescent, tasteless, perhaps even Danto's wonderful adjective, rebarbative. The sheer expendability of art objects and personalities is dizzying; that objects of art and objects of selfhood should be here today and gone tomorrow, that their obsolescence should be planned, anticipated, *precipitated*, is a truly awesome prescription, one which the artworld has been working out ever since the Readymade made its ostentatious *début* on the scene of art objects and proclaimed its equality to the masterpiece. In a sense, Danto is right: aesthetically speaking, we are far beyond the Brillo Box, which persists as only a shadow in the distance. In "The End of Art," he quotes eminent Hegelian commentator Alexandre Kojève on this point. Kojève's views regarding the post-revolutionary world of Hegel and Marx present humankind as guided solely by its own creature comforts:

In point of fact, the end of human time, or History—that is, the definitive annihilation of Man, properly speaking, or of the free and historical individual—means quite simply the cessation of action in the full sense of the term. Practically, this means the disappearance of wars and bloody revolutions. And also the disappearance of Philosophy. For since Man no longer changes essentially, there is no reason to change the (true) principles which are at the basis of his understanding of the world and himself. But all the rest can be preserved indefinitely: art, love, play, etc.: in short, everything that makes man *happy* (112).

---

of Nature, becomes extruded from Warhol's formula, what results is a radically "superficial" personality, the stuff postmodern dreams are made of.

Subjects populating the post-historical galaxy, we have no work left but play: art has in no way ended, nor has kitsch. Whatever symbiosis the two will finally agree upon—whether art and kitsch will reconcile their differences, whether art will ransack the *monde de kitsch* for new aesthetic horrors, whether kitsch will return to impersonating art or continue narcissistically dreaming of itself—the fact remains that Warhol has kitschified the sublime, an innovation which must be accounted for by any aesthetics seeking to assess cogently and credibly the artists and objects of pluralist hyperspace. That the sublime might be *lost* is of utmost importance; whether or not this loss is actualized, its possibility infuses contemporary scenes of aesthetic and poetic production/consumption with dizziness, danger and history.

### The New *Ipsos*

Taken as such, the pommo sublime as initiated by Warhol and as infiltrating the aesthetic experience from the Warhol years through the present imbues its world with a strange preciousness. While other formulations of sublimity had founded its intensity upon an experience of either personal destruction (Burke) or epistemological failure (Kant), in the Warholian context sublimity is founded upon the possibility (and promise) of oblivion. As an “altered state,” the sublime of the Romantics provided its Enlightenment refugees a mode of escape from the world of rational enterprise and moral sobriety. Transporting those sensitive enough for it to register on their imaginations out of the world of industrialism, philosophical empiricism and revolutionary disappointment, this sublime arrived on the scene of aesthetics with the

express purpose of opening the world to anti-utilitarian, meta-empirical, contra-imperial tendencies. As these inclinations ran counter to core Enlightenment mores, they became a mode of subversion through which the present was overtaken and refreshed by the past (the Wordsworthian “spot of time” in the *Prelude* or the de Quincian involute in his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*) and in which spatial violence infused the mind with the glamour of natural peril (the chasm, the Eminence, the coursing river) and supernatural danger (the succubus, the monster, the demon lover).<sup>31</sup> Its value for the Romantics derived from the ability to terrify the human person with the mythic workings of pure, unadulterated power, a primeval and indifferent natural, even supernatural, force operating outside the boundaries of picture frame or legal code, as the landscape of Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan” or Shelley’s “Mont Blanc” demonstrate, or as Wordsworth’s failure to experience sublimity while crossing the Alps in Book Six of his *Prelude* expresses.<sup>32</sup>

The Alps of Shelley and Wordsworth are a particularly apt manifestation of the Romantic sublime not merely because of the awesome physical features this mountain range possesses, but because in its unfathomable verticality and jaggedness

---

<sup>31</sup> Alethea Hayter explains De Quincey’s idea of an involute in her introduction to his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (London: Penguin Books, 1971): “The real originality of the *Confessions* is not their record of a case of opium addiction, but their pioneering study of the operation of the subconscious mind in dreams. In them De Quincey began the exploration, which he carried much further in his later work *Suspira de Profundis*, of how the mind, especially in childhood, registers experience in the shape of concrete objects which become linked together in subconscious patterns, ‘involutives’ as he called them. These involutes, which are ever afterwards associated with particular events and emotions, are crystallized by the dreaming mind” (18).

<sup>32</sup> “Hard of belief, we questioned him again,/ And all the answers which the Man returned/ To our inquiries, in their sense and substance,/ Translated by feelings which we had,/ Ended in this; that we had crossed the Alps” (*The Prelude*, Book 6, 520-525). Here, the sublime comes off as a productive absence. As in Kant, phenomenal absence leads directly to epistemological presence; though experiencing an initial “dull and heavy slackening” (464) upon hearing the peasant’s words, Wordsworth finds in his descent the natural analogue to the “workings of one mind, the features/ Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,/ Characters of the great Apocalypse,/ The types and symbols of Eternity,/ Of first and last, and midst, and without end” (568-572)

this geological oddity literalizes the Longinian concept of *ipsos*, or sublimity defined as “height.” In his 1<sup>st</sup>-century A.D. treatise *On the Sublime*, Longinus examined “great writing” in order to identify the quality of eloquence, measurable by a standard of height, which any exemplary text manifests. For Longinus, eloquence is that attribute of great writing which warps textual topography such that the text both lifts itself off the page and carries the reader along for the ride. A combination of innate dispositions, such as “natural high-mindedness” (§9: 11) and “strong and inspired emotion” (§8: 10), and acquired techniques, such as the figurative adequacy of speech and thought, “nobility of diction” (§8: 10), and “dignified and distinguished word arrangement” (§8: 10), *ipsos* is itself a hybrid creature only part of which may be learned/taught (hence it parallels the problem of artistic creation in Plato’s *Ion*). Like the genius in 18<sup>th</sup>-century thought, *ipsos* breaks rules and offends: “impious,” it transgresses the boundaries of taste (§9: 13). Great writing “takes the reader out of himself”; *ipsos* consequently becomes synonymous with bodily transcendence, instituting an extra-corporeal experience in which the body of the text causes the human body to be abandoned (§1: 4). The rhetorical effect of textual play, *ipsos* is brought about by strategies like hyperbaton (inverted syntax), polyproton (the repetition of a word in various contexts) and metabole (accumulation of the same), among others (§22-23: 33-34). Yet it appears without warning; unprepared and astounded, the reader of the sublime or ipsotic text inadvertently stumbles into the transportive experience unaware that a missile launch is in progress: “But greatness appears suddenly; like a thunderbolt it carries all before it and reveals the writer’s full power in a flash” (§1: 4). Modeled on the workings of nature, which manifest

themselves without either invitation or expectation, Longinian sublimity bursts into one's consciousness with all the power and danger of electrical discharge.

Here Warhol's abandonment of verticality for horizontality is at stake; his habit of flattening out the aesthetic achieves novel expression. To summarize, the sublime begins its conceptual history in the West with the Longinian identification of a skyward textual extension ("height"); centuries later, via the work of John Dennis, Edmund Burke, and Immanuel Kant, it finds new popularity with the transference of that quality from the page to the natural world (textual height becomes geological thrust). In the postmodern world, the sublime resurfaces as cultural imperative; it is the pulsation's third great appearance. Best seen in the work of Andy Warhol, this particular version actually regresses the word "sublime" to its Longinian meaning, yet subverts it, for what happens with the sublimity typified by the POMO tingle is that it recasts *ipsos* in terms of *farthos* (horizontal extension). Warhol's sublime does not carry one out of or above a textual or visual surface; rather, it carries one along that surface in a streaming or *glissement*. The sublime is not out of this world or exterior to the textual corpus; fundamentally in and of this world, it effects a pleasurable stretching or rhizomization. We become figure skaters as we speed along the Warholian surface. Slick, iced, slippery, it sets us in motion on a low-friction plane, transporting us from commodity to commodity through the furor of accumulation. The vertical grandeur of *ipsos* becomes the horizontal sprawl of the *farthos*; translating height into length and width, Warhol recasts sublimity in terms of maximum flatness. Paradigms and standards of surface area and volume shift;

aesthetic transport can no longer be measured in terms of depth, but instead becomes a function of the superficial.

Taken as such, what I herald as “the new *ipsos*” is obviously not so new, having taken its place in aesthetic history at least three decades ago when Warhol left the world of commercial art for that of fine art. However, what is new about the translation of the vertical into the horizontal is the working out of its existential ramifications. No longer carried into the Longinian heavens by a text that simulates one of Zeus’ lightning bolts, no longer sent reeling by the naked, apathetic and inhuman power of the geological world, the aesthetic subject of postmodern life experiences the pleasures and pains of the sublime via an ability to travel rapidly along a network of surfaces. Warhol’s film *Empire* (1963) best illustrates this rearticulation of *ipsos* in the vocabulary of a new language. One of the ironies (there are many) of Warhol’s *Empire* is thus that it pays homage to urban verticality, i.e. the skyscraper-masterpiece, while making aesthetic verticality no longer necessary. Squeezing the vertical into the new geometric parameters of the horizontal, it both plays with and reverences architectural phallicism (the skyscraper) while phrasing that phallicism in terms of an elaborately priapic joke. Significantly, *Empire* is the last of Andy Warhol’s silent films. It ends the productive silence of his early “auteur” films with the scopic bliss afforded by an uninterrupted view of New York City legend the Empire State Building.<sup>33</sup> In *Stargazer: The Life, World and Films of and*

---

<sup>33</sup> As I speculate on what the Empire State Building meant for Warhol, I cannot help but wonder what would have happened if instead of *Empire* he had later chosen to make a film called *World Trade Center*. Danto’s wish is for an impossible canvas (an Abstract-Expressionist Coca-Cola Bottle); mine is for an impossible film (*WTC*).

*Warhol*, Stephen Koch discusses the importance of *Empire* as adieu to the world of the silent film and *bonjour* to the talkie:

If ever a film was devised to be discussed and not seen, *Empire* is surely that film. Shot from the 44<sup>th</sup> floor of the Time-Life building, the camera gazes for a full eight hours of moronic unmoving rapture at New York's venerable 102-story monstrosity while the sun majestically sinks through the afternoon toward darkness in an all-too-literally breathtaking smog. Warhol had just bought his first Auricon camera—a simplified sound camera that permits single-system synchronous shooting without laying sound on the editing table. With progress so easy, Warhol couldn't resist. But, with typical perversity, after the camera was bought, he and (John) Palmer (assisted by Jonas Mekas) used the new machine to shoot the most profoundly mute motion picture ever filmed, and then, the farewell to silence complete, Warhol produced his first real talkie, the inaudible *Harlot* (60).

As Koch observes, *Empire* stands at the border of two worlds, one ending and the other about to begin. Filmed with the prosthesis of that second world, the sound camera, *Empire* thus presents a silence all the more problematic, since its reticence is not the result of technological insufficiency, but of deliberate choice. Stopping short of melancholia, the film effects a morbid visual loitering through which an edifice is experienced as total presence while a style of cinematic production is brought to a close. Quiet gives way to inaudibility.

As noted by both Koch and Victor Bockris, Warhol's exclamation while shooting the film was the mythic speech act "The Empire State Building is a Star!" That a building should become a person is not surprising here, for, as I have discussed in 1.2, the Warholian concept of thingness knows no differentiation (after all, matter

is matter). This building becomes a human entity (a star) through the atmospherization of plot and content. As is typical of Warhol's cinematic products, plot is merely what happens, and in the instance of *Empire*, several events transpire: "The sun moves through the sky. As dusk, the floodlights illuminating the upper thirty floors come on" (60); similarly, "content" is contingent, emerging not from script but from environment. Only a machine could tolerate *Empire*—"something that sees but cannot possibly care" (61). Hence the absurdism of the film lies in its inconsumability—or even in its positing of an ideal consumer (in other words, imagining which mind could perceive the film as a totality). Yet all is not absurd. As a tribute to Warhol's beloved Art Deco style, *Empire* also bears genuine reference to the artist's aesthetic hang-ups. Consequently, the film is also overtly queer. Paying such lavish attention to an art style which itself had fallen into the disreputableness of kitsch long before Warhol began collecting it constitutes an unmistakably campy act. It is thus not merely the height of Empire State which interests Warhol, or even its massiveness, but also its aesthetic detail, its signs of a devalued style. A "period piece," Empire State appears as aesthetic history, which is to materialize as the context-bound, concretized *zeitgeist* of a past (collectible) artistic order.

Read in all its splendor and vitality, *Empire* bids adieu to *ipsos* through the grandeur of its monomania. Focused on the building's supreme verticality (it was, after all, New York City's tallest building at the time), the film pays tribute to height while bringing to an end an era of cinematic immanence (Warhol's silent films). Like "The Tingle," it presents consciousness with an undigestable bolus of material which makes choking, vomiting or esophageal refusal inevitable. Flat with regard to plot,

character and action, it renders the ipsotic in terms of *farthos*. On another level, *Empire* also operates as abandonment of New York City in favor of the ultimate American center for the realization of *farthos*, Los Angeles:

The palm trees were beckoning: Warhol had begun to toy with at last forsaking his modernist sources in the plastic arts and making his move to his beloved, adored Hollywood. "I love Los Angeles. I love Hollywood. They're beautiful. Everybody's plastic, but I love plastic. I want to be plastic." There were even several trips to the Mecca in 1965, feeling out possibilities. Warhol was, of course, to remain a member of the *avant-garde* for several more years, but the idea, the dream of the move was already dancing before his eyes, irresistible. Strange dream, not of the future but of the past, ephemeral as a black-and-white vision of Dietrich's lifting eyebrow (62).

While this anticipation of a paradisaal move to L.A. would never become a reality for Warhol, it represents the fantasy of a sound cinema which might remove him from the cloistered space of modernism altogether by making him a clearing in the post-history of New York City's great urban rival.<sup>34</sup> In this fantasy, the verticality of an island city is replaced by the unsightly sprawl of suburbs surrounding an empty nucleus. That *Empire* should be positioned at the aesthetic border between a modernity rooted in New York City and a post- or contra-modernity blooming in Los Angeles (specifically, Hollywood) is of major import. Los Angeles' persistence as a

---

<sup>34</sup> Mary Woronov reports a telling disappointment with Los Angeles: "Still nobody came to see us at the Trip, the tiny club on Sunset where we were booked. Without the protective shell of New York we seemed to have lost our magic. The reviews were terrible: 'The Velvets should go back underground and practice,' 'They will replace nothing except maybe suicide.' On the third night the sheriff's office shut down the club for disturbing the peace. Meanwhile down the street, the Whisky A Go Go was packed with the crazed followers of L.A.'s false rock 'n' roll god, Frank Zappa, who mocked us, and whom we hated. When we went to the Whisky I felt especially humiliated because up above the door, trapped in a beautiful Plexiglas box, an ecstatic blonde girl danced totally high on the bliss of her own body. Her costume was mostly suntan, her own special air and music were pumped in, and everyone worshipped her. It was an image of heaven but someone else was there instead of me" (36).

fantasy points to the possibility that the postmodern sublime does not come fully into its own via Warhol, that an *ipsos* translated entirely into a *farthos* never occurs in his work, even when that work is at its most subversive. If a *farthos* that is really a toppled or attenuated *ipsos* is merely an asymptote which Warhol can only approximate, even when he is at his most plastic, then the new “height” or “eloquence” I have posited is truly new, awaiting full and complete expression in a future transcending Warhol’s moment in the sun. A tingle which is apperceptive and paranormal results: our bodies shiver as they sample a taste of the future. The tingle of lemons and phantom limbs anticipates change; taste buds and amputational loci experience the vague yet undeniable residues of sensation. The possibility that *farthos* might fail at embodying *ipsos* brings art and aesthetic subjectivity to the edge of a creative abyss. In this situation, experiencing the potential for loss stimulates, excites and inspires. It is the ultimate postmodern thrill ride.

#### 1.4 Arabesques and Inwardness: Romantic Paradigms

This is how I think of the matter. Poetry is so deeply rooted in man that at times, even under the most unfavorable circumstances, it grows without cultivation (Schlegel, *Dialogue on Poetry*, 96).

#### The Beginning of the End

Since hypotheses about the end of art recall the ways Romanticism was theorized in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, I turn from a present obsessed with art's obviation toward the past where that obviation was first predicted. The two aestheticians who promise maximum Warholian resonance are Germany's Friedrich Schlegel and Georg Hegel. Locating the end of art in Romanticism proper, they enrich Danto's Brillo box thesis and pull Warhol deeper into the field of aesthetic enquiry. Furthermore, as 2.1 will demonstrate, they provide a vocabulary for articulating Warhol's abnegation of revolutionary thinking, his turn from, for example, loaded serial reproductions of Marilyn Monroe or Liz Taylor in the 60s to insipid society portraiture in the 70s and 80s. In Warhol, axioms of Romantic thought thin out to near nothingness, connecting him to past aesthetic and poetic projects through the important damage he inflicts upon them. The sublime, reformulated by Warhol in terms not of vertical height but of horizontal extension, and seeming at times to verge on total loss, represents one Warholian engagement of Romantic ideology. Other hot zones include (1) the category of the grotesque and its tributary, the arabesque, as well as (2) the fate of consciousness after *Geist* comes to know itself perfectly and the world loses its allure as subjectivity machine (what Habermas in *The Philosophical Discourse of*

*Modernity* refers to as a “production paradigm”).<sup>1</sup> Placing Warhol in the context of Germany’s Romanticism debates will thus regress contemporary philosophies of art to their roots in German Idealist thought while progressing Warhol toward a more nuanced argument about why he and no other artist becomes credited with the death of art.

For the Schlegel of the *Dialogue on Poetry* (1800), the essence of Romanticism is to be found in the movement’s affinity for the relatively new genre of the novel, which takes on the characteristics and temper of the arabesque, or that version of *grotesquerie* emphasizing play. For the Hegel of the *Aesthetics* (1835), Romanticism’s essence is located in the Romantic *weltanschauung*’s total exhaustion of the artistic impulse via objective humor and the dominance of inwardness, which, embodied in a consciousness radically separate from the elements of the intersubjective or shared world, no longer seeks expression through them. Read in the context of one another, Schlegel and Hegel diverge significantly in their respective predictions for the influence that Romanticism will have on the history of the fine arts, the one viewing it as potentially sparking an artistic revival, the other deeming it the last stage in the Bildungsroman of Spirit before art is transcended and religion becomes the new medium for Spirit’s accession to self-knowledge. While

---

<sup>1</sup> For Habermas, both Marx and Hegel base their philosophies on production paradigms: Hegel emphasizes the production of consciousness, while Marx focuses on the productions of labor. Neither survives the transition to postmodernism. “However, the production paradigm detached from its roots in the philosophy of reflection brings with it at least three new problems when it is called upon to perform similar tasks in social theory: (1) The production paradigm so restricts the concept of practice that the question arises of how the paradigmatic activity-type of labor or the making of products is related to all the other cultural forms of expression of subjects capable of speech and action... (2) The production paradigm gives a naturalistic meaning to the concept of practice in such a way that the question arises of whether any normative content at all can still be derived from the metabolic process between society and nature... (3) The production paradigm gives the concept of practice such a clear empirical meaning that the question arises of whether it loses its plausibility with the historically foreseeable end of a society based upon labor” (“Excursus on the Obsolescence of the Production Paradigm,” 78-79).

Schlegel finds the Romantic moment stimulating and inspiring, as perhaps even kick-starting the development of a new mythos, for Hegel it marks the apogee of an artistic orbit. These differing prognoses of the future of art will be examined in this chapter—and how Warhol bears out their prognostications. As I have argued with regard to the Danto debates in 1.2 and 1.3, through them Warhol himself comes to occupy the slot festooned with the momentous caption “Last Artist.” After Warhol, art objects continue to be proliferated without their being rooted to any notion of historical necessity or the ultimate positivist telos, progress. As such, they merely accumulate and take up space and attention, their aggregation never achieving the organic importance of the synergistic work of art (Hegel, Coleridge) or a “universal poetry” (Schlegel, Herder). Since it is the Schlegel/Hegel nexus which first put the question of the potential end of art in circulation and which tied that end to Romanticism proper, it is to this conjunction I turn in my desire to delineate Warhol’s Pop-Romantic resonance. Taking Danto back to the German Idealist matrix from which so many of his ideas have sprung, I rephrase the issue of art’s futurity in terms of Schlegelian fixations (grotesquerie, the dance of minutiae) and Hegelian preoccupations (the withdrawal of subjectivity from the outer world, the reduction of the world to a system of layered surfaces via aestheticism). In this discussion, Warhol’s films *Afternoon* (1965) and *Vinyl* (1965) come into play, underscoring the ways Warhol’s Underground cinema dramatizes the existential consequences of a Romanticism poised at either the end of art or the start of its most vital epoch yet.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> In a sense, all Warhol’s films are products of an Underground. Shown largely at offbeat venues, like Jonas Mekas’ Film-Makers Cinematheque, his productions from 1963-1967 represented the far reaches of a burgeoning Independent Cinema. Warhol’s films created a particular media creature, the Underground star (Edie Sedgwick, Taylor Mead, Viva). 1966’s *The Chelsea Girls* gave Warhol and

## Transcendental Buffoonery

Is art a telescope or a microscope?<sup>3</sup> As a prosthesis enabling consumers to make contact with the world, does it bring objects and situations installed too far away to be perceived without mediation closer, or does it enlarge the minute such that entities falling under an empirical threshold are rendered clear, distinct, whole? Questions such as these permeate Schlegel's *Dialogue on Poetry* and allow him to develop a theory of the vital role "the situation" will play in the artistic and poetic creations of modernity.<sup>4</sup> Coming down on the side of the ebbings and flowings of the communal, Schlegel locates the future of art in its ability to produce and critique verisimilitudes of the human comedy and its social flux.<sup>5</sup> While derelict minds might find in the elevated status given the everyday by Schlegel an anachronistic endorsement of the sitcom or even Reality TV (Schlegel meets E!'s *The Anna Nicole*

---

his entourage the opportunity to go aboveground, being shown at the Regency on 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, NYC, and generating a real profit. Films made with Paul Morrissey from 1968 through 1973 did not replicate the success of *Chelsea Girls*. Warhol's last film, *Bad* (1976), was a total failure commercially—though a success critically, as reported by Hackett (*Diaries*, xvi).

<sup>3</sup> In *Time Regained* (New York: Vintage Books, 1982), Proust's Narrator contrasts the microscope with the telescope as metaphors for the ways in which art traverses distance: "Before long I was able to show a few sketches. No one understood anything of them. Even those who commended my perception of the truths which I wanted eventually to engrave within the temple, congratulated me on having discovered them 'with a microscope,' when on the contrary it was a telescope that I had used to observe things which were indeed very small to the naked eye, but only because they were situated at a great distance, and which were each of them in itself a world" (1098).

<sup>4</sup> Throughout my discussion of Schlegel, I rely not on the revised *Dialogue* presented by Schlegel in his *Sämtliche Werke* (1822-1825), but on its first printing in *Athenaeum* III (1800). Following Ernst Behler's and Roman Struc's argument that the second version is inferior to the first, especially in its effacement of the importance of the novel in favor of the call for a new mythology, I have gone with the more vital text—especially since the revised text downplays irony in favor of the symbolic. My source for Schlegel throughout is Behler's and Struc's *Friedrich Schlegel: Dialogue on Poetry and Literary Aphorisms* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968).

<sup>5</sup> "There are ancient and modern poems which breathe, in their entirety and in every detail, the divine breath of irony. In such poems there lives a real transcendental buffoonery. Their interior is permeated by the mood which surveys everything and rises infinitely above everything limited, even above the poet's own art, virtue, and genius; and their exterior form by the histrionic style of an ordinary good Italian buffo" (*Lyceum*, #42). This love of the *buffo* is reiterated in the *Dialogue*, in which a theory of "Transcendental buffoonery" is offered by ironist Antonio.

*Show*), such a reading would not be entirely off the mark. Given the fact that the medium of television is perfectly adequate for displaying life *qua* life (even more perfect than the cinema), one version of Schlegel's relevance for postmodernity would be that the arabesque finds its most comfortable home in the boob tube—but that first it must pass through Warhol's early cinema and its mania for presenting reality un- or minimally edited. Hence one path investigated in this chapter begins with the novel, continues with Warholian *cinema vérité*, then points to a future in which a show like *Anna Nicole* can be recognized as heir to the arabesque. Truly, Schlegel does place the weight of art upon the intersubjective and its concrete, worldly manifestations as these swirl about in arabesquing eddies and vortices. Social constellations and “adventures” figure prominently as they become imbued with the fluidity and fantasy of that variant of the grotesque, the arabesque. Sparkling and delightful, the collisions of independent human subjects getting in one another's way as they go about the business of living bequeath to art its specifically modern content. Invoking this theory of the arabesque, Schlegel offers an aesthetic of play by which the interactions constituting social life for a population are imported into the opera house and art gallery (not, of course, to everyone's joy). Through art, the mechanism a world uses to achieve social expression is bracketed. Neither cathartic nor cathectic, the appropriative act by which real-time events receive artistic treatment and framing introduces an art committed to the frivolous and the trivial, qualities which at first glance might seem to banalize modernism rather than guarantee its future relevance. That the decorative and ornamental should be postulated as carrying the germ cells of futurity entails Schlegel's most precious

concept, irony. The distance between intention and actualization, between the ideal and the real, manifests itself in an art of the fragmentary.<sup>6</sup>

In his *Dialogue*, Schlegel presents a productive nucleus of aesthetes for whom discerning the future work of *poiesis* is a primary task; modeled perhaps loosely on his own circle at Jena—Vortex Jena, as Hugh Kenner might word it—the group who gathers in the *Dialogue* constitutes a salon. Its tasks are to critique contemporary works of art and to speculate on the path the arts will take in the future.<sup>7</sup> The *Dialogue*'s coterie consists of Amalia, Camilla, Andrea, Marcus, Antonio, Lothario, Antonio and Ludovico, friends gathering regularly to engage in poetic battle. Sparks fly between Amalia, the group's idealist, and Antonio, its daemonic troublemaker and "realist." Aesthetically, the tension between the two manifests itself through their attitudes toward the fine arts and their ideal work. Throughout the *Dialogue*, Amalia opposes an art of the ordinary, whose products she deems crass and *dégoûté*. At its start, she criticizes the dramatic production she and Camilla had recently taken in, charging it with its failure to transcend the

---

<sup>6</sup> Schlegel's love of the fragmentary is best demonstrated by the various aphorisms published in the journals central to German Romanticism, the *Lyceum* and the *Athenaeum*. For Schlegel, the aphorism is "the true form of the universal philosophy"; as "marginal notes to the text of the age," aphorisms present the only possible glimpse at the totality of world history (*Athenaeum*, #259). Furthermore, the aphorism is *symphilosophical*—it becomes the product of multiple minds. As Behler and Struc point out, Schlegel delighted in the fact that "fraternal involution and gigantic symphonizing" were at work in his aphorisms (42). See also *Lyceum* #112, in which Schlegel identifies the "synthetic writer" as one who, unlike the analytical writer, "enters into a solemn relationship of innermost symphilosophy or sympoetry" (132).

<sup>7</sup> According to Behler and Struc, this productive nucleus consisted of Freidrich Schlegel, his brother August, August's wife Caroline, Dorothea Veit, Ludwig Tieck, Schelling and Novalis. Cross-fertilized by the Berlin circle (Fichte, Schleiermacher), this group represented a fusion of aesthetic vanguardism with philosophical transcendentalism. Coleridge encountered these strains of thought when he came to Jena to study philosophy, and hence it is these ideas which entered English Romanticism via his *Biographia Literaria*. In *The Pound Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), Hugh Kenner applies Ezra Pound's concept of vorticality to images as well as people; thus, in this instance, I identify the Jena circle as a vortex in order to indicate that, through it, an important effect is produced (the development of German Romantic thought). Like Kenner's vortices, the Jena Vortex is a vector through which cultural work is made possible.

commonplace: “Nothing happened in the play we are talking about except what happens there every day, a good deal of nonsense” (57). Her aversion to the banal finds its antithesis in the ideas of Antonio, for whom the ironic represents the noblest quest of the work of art. For example, early on, he plays with the minds of his dialogic clique: “Antonio, who occasionally liked to introduce polemical ideas into the conversation although he rarely led it, asserted that the basic principles of English criticism and enthusiasm should be sought in Smith’s *On National Wealth*” (58).<sup>8</sup> Willfully making the category error of naming Adam Smith’s foundational capitalist text a work of literary criticism, Antonio the jester is the perfect foil for Amalia the high-minded snob; as his later *Letter about the Novel* clarifies, Antonio both reads and speaks between the lines, espousing opinions which provoke and galvanize his fellow theorists.

The *Dialogue* takes place in four stages: *Epochs of Literature* (Andrea), *Talk on Mythology* (Ludovico), *Letter about the Novel* (Antonio), and *Essay about the Different Styles in Goethe’s Early and Late Works* (Marcus). As Ernst Behler and Roman Struc point out in their Introduction to the *Dialogue*, these four separate units do not come together organically, but instead achieve the holism of an “organized chaos”—although here “chaos” is etymologically reverted to its Greek sense of “a primordial fusion of the original elements of the world” (10-11). As productive confusion, the effect produced by these individual speeches is generically and

---

<sup>8</sup> The group’s resident polemicist, Antonio clearly represents a version of Schlegel himself. Like Kierkegaard’s *daemon* in *Either/Or*, he seduces those around him through piquancy. See also Schlegel’s ideas about Romantic irony: “Philosophy is the true home of irony, which might be defined as logical beauty: for wherever men are philosophizing in spoken or written dialogues, and provided they are not entirely systematic, irony ought to be produced and postulated; even the Stoics regarded urbanity as a virtue” (#42, *Lyceum*).

textually heterogenous, causing it to remain unclear how the lessons taught by the *Dialogue*'s participants are to be unified into some transmissible meta-lesson.<sup>9</sup> Through these varied and often contradictory passages, key aesthetic debates of the time are introduced: (1) the problem of how to unify the disparate poetics of world history into one continuous, surging strain, (2) the urgent evocation of a new, invariably German, mythology, (3) the ironic lifting up of the details of intramundanity to the status of high art, and (4) the positioning of Goethe with respect to the tension between the moderns and the ancients. Whether or not all tributaries of poetry flow back into "one vast sea" or instead go their own separate ways becomes Andrea's task (53); how Germany as a nation-state will, in the wake of Romantic subjectivism, rise from the dust of nihilism in the production of a new unifying mythology, is Ludovico's challenge. Next, Antonio accounts for the superficialities of the common world, while Marcus situates Goethe at the apex of world poesis and as the solution to the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*. Among the debates sparked by the *salonistes*' positions emerges Amalia's obsession with the development of a poetic theory transcending genre, and, as I have already indicated, the problem of the transmissibility of such a system.

Amid all these explosions, the collisions of Amalia's and Antonio's respective ideas cause the most productive conflagrations to burn. Their debates turn on the axis of the ordinary, as it is Amalia who cannot tolerate the trivialities ushered in by

---

<sup>9</sup> Here, as in Plato's *Ion*, the issue of greatest import is artistic educability—in other words, how the new Romanticism is to be taught to those wishing to participate in Progressive Universal Poetry: "But the sublime discipline of genuine criticism should teach the lover of poetry how he ought to form his inner self. Above all it should teach him to grasp every other independent form of poetry in its classical power and abundance, so that the flower and kernel of other minds may become a sustenance and seed for its own imagination" (53).

Romantic practice and Antonio who heralds them with gusto. Throughout the dialogue, it is she who has the most developed sense of the urgency of rescuing art from the debilitating effect of radical subjectivism, and hence she who stands most opposed to Antonio's aesthetic of radical play. Of all the offerings presented by this radiant cluster, Antonio's *Letter about the Novel* best embodies a knowledge about the role the novelistic plays in making room for the miniscule. Antonio's *Letter* comes upon the scene as a relic of his personal acquaintance with Amalia. As we learn at the symposium concluding Ludovico's *Talk on Mythology*, the missive first appears as a private document (a literal epistle) directed to a potentially amorous audience of one: "What I have to contribute to the symposium is somewhat lighter fare. Amalia has already forgiven me and allowed me to direct my instructions that were intended only for her to the entire group" (93). What this public-private document presents is certainly a "lighter fare," for while the discussions which have preceded his have treated the artistic enterprise with gravity and piety, his installment strikes no such reverential pose. Alluding to a previous conversation in which Amalia had dismissed the novels of Friedrich Richter as being no more than "a colorful hodgepodge of sickly wit," Antonio makes an alternate appraisal: "I admit the colorful hodgepodge of sickly wit; but I shall defend it and emphatically maintain that such grotesques and confessions are the only romantic productions of our unromantic age" (95).<sup>10</sup> Novels cultivate in their consumers a vital sense of the grotesque, which for Antonio denotes that aesthetic category assigned to works of art

---

<sup>10</sup> Surprisingly, Amalia is a Romantic closet case: "With astonishment and inner anger, I have often seen your servant carry piles of volumes to you... You have read almost all the bad books from Fielding to La Fontaine. Ask yourself what you profited by it" (Antonio's address, 95). As the dialogue will explain, the educational value of drivel is that it prepares one to appreciate the irony of divine wit.

mirroring the contortions of society—for example, Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones* and Laurence Sterne’s *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* qualify as grotesque according to Antonio’s definition of the term. Enabling one to grasp the cosmic irony which pervades life, novelistic grotesques encourage release from the constraints of logic: “When stupidity reaches a certain height, which we often see know when everything is more severely differentiated, stupidity equals foolishness, even in the external appearance. And foolishness, you will admit, is the loveliest thing that man can imagine, and the actual and ultimate principle of all amusement” (98). Replacing Marcus’ theory of genre with a theory of the novel, Antonio productively assimilates the novelistic to the arabesque because of its inherent playfulness: “No consideration is taken in it of the difference between appearance and truth, play and seriousness” (100). Along with the arabesque, the confession is the only other specifically Romantic product of Antonio’s age. Arabesque and confession both present a “true story” and unveil an author’s personality, revealing it as pure force. Presented playfully, the effluence of personalities and surfaces which makes the world worldly becomes art’s divine purview: “Even in the quite popular genres, as for instance in drama, we demand irony; we demand that events, men, in short the play of life, be taken as play and be represented as such” (89).

As Wolfgang Kayser explains in his survey of the history of the grotesque in art, the arabesque so praised by Antonio for its productive vapidness and irrepressible play shares a common root with the grotesque. Tracing the grotesque back to its first appearance as an ornamental style which came to light in 15<sup>th</sup>-century Italian excavations, Kayser identifies the painter Raphael as igniting the Renaissance

fascination for this mode of expression; in fact, Raphael's famous deployment of the style gives it new life for Italy and modernity. Soon after the emergence of the grotesque, two variant terms came into existence, the moresque and the arabesque: "The term 'moresque' is used to designate a kind of two-dimensional ornament exclusively composed of rigidly stylized leaves and tendrils painted over a uniform background which is preferably kept in black and white. The arabesque, on the other hand, involves the use of perspective; unlike the Moresque, it is tectonic (that is, distinguished between above and below); it is more profuse, so that the background is often completely hidden; and it avails itself of patterns composed of more realistic shoots, leaves, and blossoms, to which animal forms are occasionally added" (22). Kayser's account of the arabesque's provenance allows me to make the transition from the world of Schlegel to that of Warhol: the one theorizes a world of play, while the other devotes his life and work to recording the play of personalities and events. What Kayser identifies as the perpetual play of the arabesque and, by extension, the grotesque, is exactly the spirit of Romanticism as espoused by Antonio and as put into practice by Warhol. Like the "arabesque" of gymnastics, Antonio's involves a corporeal fluidity and an ornamental virtuosity (it shows off). Making the ornamental a central problem of Romantic theory, Antonio uses the grotesque/arabesque to put forth a theory of the importance of even bad art and literature, which, like Susan Sontag's later idea of camp, inspires by virtue of its trash value. The trash value of the social arabesque is a product of its honesty; faithfully reproducing social milieux as a play of bodies and objects, it does not critique the world so much as give way to its fluctuations. To these it permits free reign. The distance which consequently

opens between the real and the ideal produces an irony the taste for which defines the modern, Romantic palate. Inherently sportive, the arabesque embodies the principle of play which cuts through modernism and postmodernism, reaching its apex in Warhol, for whom the twists and turns of the world's inhabitants constitute a supreme artistic content.<sup>11</sup>

### A Day Like Any Other

With trash value and diurnal flux in mind, I turn from Schlegel to Warhol, ignoring traditionally grotesque pieces like *Skull* (1976), *Shadows* (1979) or *Myths* (1981), and turning to the spirit of arabesque play saturating his films (specifically, *Afternoon*). The arabesque's pure ornamentality and lack of external referent make decoration a fundamental concern, and hence become important, if idiosyncratic, ways of discussing the Romanticism of Warhol's ethos. While Warhol's filmed and transcribed arabesques for the most part lack the fantastic element highlighted by Antonio, for whom the arabesque's journey frequently involves a human encounter with the otherworldly, they replace that adventuresomeness with a more urban journey into the heart of social otherness (fags, hustlers, dykes, drug addicts, drag queens, viragos).<sup>12</sup> Warhol mines this source of exoticism for all its riches.

---

<sup>11</sup> According to Frances K. Barasch in *The Grotesque: A Study in Meanings* (Mouton: The Hague, 1971), the arabesque is a *grotesque sportive*: "To Ruskin, Raphael's arabesque's in the Vatican constituted 'an elaborate and luscious form of nonsense' (XI, 162). And an even baser form of the 'sportive' grotesque was the 'impotent or disgusting caricature' which portrayed the ugliest forms, mocked 'at all things with the laughter of the idiot' and had its literary counterpart in the works of 'a group of writers headed by Charles Dickens'" (XI, 172) (156).

<sup>12</sup> "Only the imagination can grasp the mystery of this love and present it as a mystery; and this mysterious quality is the source of the fantastic in the form of all poetic representation. The imagination strives with all its might to express itself, but the divine can communicate and express

Performing themselves, the characters of his movies and books find themselves generally liberated from plot and script, despite Ronnie Tavel's or others' efforts to provide one; their only task is "to be," and as such to transport their audience into the realm of an alterity whose greatest irony is its presentation as banal. One such adventure is presented by *Afternoon*, in which the presumably ordinary, normal activities of "actors" Dorothy Dean, Ondine, Edie Sedgwick, Arthur Loeb and Donald Lyons are presented in the expected uninterrupted, amorphous streaming.<sup>13</sup> Gabbing it up, arguing, taking turns suggesting ways to fritter away time, and, ultimately, both doing and scavenging for drugs, this cluster of 60s personalities and Superstars occupies a lush temporal sprawl; essentially doing nothing (hence they prefigure so many of the stars of Reality TV), they are presented in their "natural" state of play by Warhol, the ultimate recording device for the social zoo. While Reel 1 was initially slated to be included in Warhol's "blockbuster" *The Chelsea Girls* along with its other 12 reels, it instead finds a home with the two accompanying reels of *Afternoon*; still, the sense that we are viewing some analogue of *The Chelsea Girls* (i.e. a realtime freakshow) remains.<sup>14</sup> Viewed subsequently, the film's three reels excise a

---

itself only indirectly in the sphere of nature. Therefore, of that which originally was imagination there remains in the world of appearances only what we call wit" (*Dialogue*, 100).

<sup>13</sup> Dorothy Dean is Warhol's first black queen; cold, intellectual, and proper, she is a perfect foil to Edie Sedgwick, Warhol's spaced-out pixie twin. Dean also appears in *My Hustler* (1965); Edie Sedgwick appears in numerous films, including *Poor Little Rich Girl* (1965), *Beauty #2* (1965) and *Outer and Inner Space* (1965). 1965 is her year to shine; by 1966, she has been replaced as "It-girl" by Nico. Ondine (Bob Olivo) is a primary source of inspiration for Warhol in the early to mid-60s; his amphetamine-driven antics capture Warhol's attention from both cinematic and literary perspectives. *The Loves of Ondine* (1967) is his final Warhol film. Factorygoers Arthur Loeb and Donald Lyons appear only in *Afternoon*.

<sup>14</sup> *Chelsea Girls*' 12 reels were originally shown on a split screen, one juxtaposed alongside the other. The order and pairing are as follows: *Father Ondine and Ingrid/Nico in Kitchen*; *Boys in Bed (The John)/Brigid Polk Holds Court (The Duchess)*; *Hanoi Hannah and Guests/Hanoi Hannah (The Queen of China)*; *Marie Mencken (The Gerard Malanga Story)/Mario Sings Two Songs*; *Color Lights on Cast/Eric Says All (The Trip)*; *Nico Crying/The Pope Ondine Story*. *Afternoon* was excised from this order.

portion of the day which, separated from a morning and an evening, come across as “normal” and ordinary, despite the fact that what we are watching is far from mainstream.

On this, a nondescript June afternoon at Edie Sedgwick’s Manhattan apartment, the Chelsea Hotel, Room 202, Dorothy, Ondine and Edie sit on the sofa while their friend Andy innocently turns on his Auricon so that this one particular afternoon in what is presumably a sequence of similar afternoons might be immortalized for the posterity of artists and urban anthropologists. In this ensemble, black queen Dorothy’s sexuality, her propensity to fall in love with fags, complicates the day’s erotics.<sup>15</sup> Clutching that symbol of shyness, introversion and self-enclosure, the turtle (a stuffed one), she vies unsuccessfully for Ondine’s attention with Edie, Arthur and Donald. Whether the constellation of bodies on the famous sofa is DD—A—E, E—DD—A, DD—E—, or one of the many other configuration of bodies which throughout *Afternoon* come to represent cartographic climaxes, shifts, realignments, the “force field” or distribution of energies remains constant: Dorothy vies with Edie for Ondine’s attention, perhaps because of his advanced campiness, perhaps because he is the group’s source of amphetamines, perhaps because he is the Fag of the Moment. Ondine’s and Edie’s mutual physical engagement—he bites her calf, she showers him with vodka—is matched by no such physical engagement of Dorothy, who physically connects best with her stuffed terrapin. And so she clutches

---

<sup>15</sup> She is also “Queen Cock,” as Ondine dubs her in the film. QC is “the true Dorothy.” In his memoir *The Women* (New York: Noonday Press, 1996), Hilton Als discusses Dean’s affinity for gay men: “As an undergraduate, Dean began attracting men who would meet her parents’ standards, given that they were white, moneyed, with access to power. Unlike the Deans, then men Dorothy courted had a complicated relationship to what they were: white, moneyed, with access to power. Nevertheless, those men were like Dorothy in one respect: they were a disgrace to their privileged race because they were homosexual” (73). One such man was Arthur Loeb, her co-star in *Afternoon* (Als, 85).

her turtle, an abject creature missing both eyes and tail, interrupted in her love affair now and then by Warhol, who is forced by Dorothy's radical "outsiderliness," her nonintegration into the scene of interacting bodies, to make himself audible: (to Edie) "Throw yourself on Dorothy"; (to Dorothy) "Look in this camera and smile... That's beautiful"; (to Dorothy) "Now walk back again... Walk on the couch... Walk over him... Edie, get behind Dorothy." Unlike the other performers, Dorothy, resting immobile and awkward within the confines of the gravitational field generated by her dissociated body, must be directed, must be made to move—and Warhol must be made to show himself, to become present through her body.

Throughout the afternoon, outsider Dorothy acts out the drama of her Negressity, staging it in the midst of a day which belongs to her by not belonging to her.<sup>16</sup> While others are content with defining Andy—"Warhol is the end"... "Warhol is heaven"—Dorothy instigates trouble, asking again and again the fraught question "Who is Drella? What is Drella? Where is Drella?" (later, in *a*, she will answer her own question: "Drella is Drella," 316).<sup>17</sup> In *Afternoon*, Dorothy is piquant with not only Warhol. "Look at Ondine's hairy back," she acerbically observes. "Depends what you mean by bad argument," she quips, forcing Edie to qualify some quasi-

---

<sup>16</sup> In *The Women*, Als traces the problem of "the Negress" through the lives of Dorothy Dean, Malcolm X's mother, and Als' own mother. For Als, the Negress is irreducible and immanent. While literature struggles to grasp her contours, it must necessarily fail because she exceeds such limitation (without becoming a metaphysical entity).

<sup>17</sup> In *The Women*, the only literary record of Dean's life, Als credits Dean with coining the nickname "Drella," a fusion of Dracula with Cinderella. Warhol, too gives her credit: "'Drella' was a nickname somebody had given me that stuck more than I wanted it to. Ondine and a character named Dorothy Dyke used it all the time—they said it came from combining Dracula and Cinderella" (*POPism*, 153). Though "Drella," like other terms in circulation at the Factory—"Superstar," for instance—are impossible to trace genealogically, since they are claimed as the cultural or semantic property of too many fame-crazed individuals, it is delicious to imagine that Dorothy first delineated the traces of the bloodsucking Eastern European fiend and disenfranchised princess-to-be within Warhol's persona. *a* credits Dorothy: "D—Well maybe DoDo made it up. DoDo's got a name..." but only after two possibilities, Ondine and Rotten Rita, are entertained by Drella (262).

philosophical statement she has just made. Finally, Dorothy offers her ultimate blow: “Let’s play Virginia Woolf. We’ll attack one another’s shortcomings.”<sup>18</sup> Virginia Woolf *is* Dorothy’s game throughout the film. She is a node of resistance and perfect counterpoint to Edie, who spends a good portion of the film grappling with the philosophy of mind: “People have to develop a suspension of mind...in order to progress at all.” “Edie, in 1,000 words or less, what is outer space?” she is asked at the start of Reel 2, answering with a commentary on “speed,” which she defines as “1,000 times faster than reality.”<sup>19</sup> On opposite sides of the sofa, the two Cambridge rivals, Dorothy, the black success story and Fulbright Scholar, and Edie, the white dropout and failed sculptor, offer incommensurable philosophies, posing entirely different questions.<sup>20</sup> “World” devolves to “worlds.” Over the voices of this crowd the music of Maria Callas booms. At one point, Edie and Ondine disagree over whether the appropriate background noise should be opera (Ondine) or rock-n-roll music (Edie); as in *Horse* (1965), Callas’ voice silences all others, forcing an interaction among members of the tableau with each other and with the music. Denied opera, Ondine makes perhaps the film’s most dramatic gesture by taking over the microphone and thus becoming its soundtrack: “I have the microphone...Hello, America.”

---

<sup>18</sup> A central problem in *Afternoon* is how to occupy the day’s time. “What can we do? What should we do?”; the desperate question is reiterated. Should they go to the beach (Ondine/Edie)? Will “camping it up” end the boredom (Edie)? Is a trip to the zoo in order (Ondine)? “We could go to Europe” (Edie).

<sup>19</sup> As the ensuing drug discussion makes clear, Edie’s response of “speed” is itself an ironic reference to her taste in drugs. “Speed” is one of the stars of the film—a hot commodity and point of obsession, as in the *Brigid Holds Court* and *Pope Ondine* reels of *The Chelsea Girls*.

<sup>20</sup> For images of Edie’s art, see Jean Stein’s *Edie: An American Biography* (New York: Dell, 1982); her drawings of a mouse and of a raccoon caring for her young provide a glimpse of her aesthetic, and call forth the problem of Edie’s own relationship to innocence.

When Dorothy sprinkles pepper in Ondine's hair, he responds "Why don't you serve my head for lunch?"<sup>21</sup> "You don't feel like the N word, do you?" someone asks later on. "You're not stupid, dear, but you do suggest the education of Africa will solve the world's problems," offers Arthur, to which the general reply is "She's not African." Dorothy's identity, as in *a*, is a site of contestation: how is the Factory crowd to account for the intrusion of a black body and, more importantly, a black mind, into the space they have reserved for their own white bodies and minds?<sup>22</sup> Dean goes on to pose a typically cruel and well-deserved question: "Stupid people...Do we have any here?...Where?" Part "cannibal" (Ondine's comment), part "educated African" (another of Ondine's comments), and very much the antithesis of a "stupid person," Dorothy offers an unassimilable presence complicated and frustrated by her own desires to assimilate, to become white, male, queer, an A-head. The film ends with her only real contact with Ondine, apart from a momentary barrage of pinches: he dispenses speed to her with the instructions "Place ¼ of this in a little tissue." Here the drug content of the film crystallizes, for although we have already seen Ondine distribute amphetamines to the group, and while we have heard his phone conversations with superstar dealer Rotten Rita, it is at this moment that the drug narrative takes on a new solidity, if only because after this point the film runs out, and we are left to ruminate on the question of the afternoon's (and evening's) drug intake. Leaving to assist Rita with "a problem," Ondine breaks the party up in

---

<sup>21</sup> The pepper sequence begins in Reel 1, when Edie notices that "that black stuff that fell out of the vent" has landed in her vodka; as a response, Ondine fetches a pepper mill. Like other accessories and implements in the film, it immediately acquires a fetishistic quality, capturing multiple imaginations as they lose themselves in materiality.

<sup>22</sup> The problem of black queenship is also part of *Camp* (1965); here, black supermodel Donyale Luna is the inexplicable presence. See "Social Collage" in 2.4, "Meta-celebrity," for a closer look at this film and its deliberate and important miscontextualization of the black queen.

order to help out one of the Factory's key dealers, presumably entering a different drug narrative or "order" entirely. Making sure to provide Dorothy with "a little dosage," he substitutes the lack of attention she has received with the gift of powdered energy and the instructions for preserving it. With the search for more stimulants, the film ends. White meth on a white screen.

While earlier in the film Ondine has informed everyone that all his drugs "are locked up in the car" (this before an initial tweak session), here, at the fringe of the arabesque, he exits to intercept Rotten Rita in the acquisition of a little something something. Antonio's desire for an art committed to play finds satiation in the ménagerie presented by *Afternoon*'s stars. Fulfilling Schlegel's fantasy of an ironic art, Warhol has subjected the daily life of his circle to a critical act of *epoché* presenting the events of realtime as an unchecked continuum. Going a step beyond the novelistic, *Afternoon* dispenses with script altogether, allowing the world itself to generate its own text. True to form, the camera runs without intervention, imprinting traces of all that has filled the elapsing hours of the day. Democratic, the camera's gaze knows no difference, registering banal moments and ruptures with the same obliviousness: nothing matters, and so everything counts. Things create residues: this logic and no other determines *Afternoon*. Things create residues, and we must process them in their sedimentation. Unsightly and unseemly, the film's unbroken totality abjures the ideal, allowing the real to glut its audience's sensorium to the point of unreality. The meaning of the arabesque for Antonio—the idea that the novel as genre gives free expression to microcosmic happenings and collisions—finds a fraternal spirit in *Afternoon*. Like Antonio's decadent yet world-historical

Romantic era, the scopophilic Warhol era has no higher aspiration than to record. Through the character of Ludovico, the *Dialogue* extends the sportiveness of the arabesque even into the realm of physics: "I cannot conclude without urging once more the study of physics, from whose dynamic paradoxes the most sacred revelations of nature are now bursting forth in all directions" (88). For the *Dialogue's* Lothario as well, the novelistic is continued in the realm of bouncing atoms: "All the sacred plays of art are only a remote imitation of the infinite play of the universe, the work of art which eternally creates itself anew" (89). With Lothario's reply, the "play" privileged by Antonio gets recast as a primordial bubbling. Moving from the interplay of social creatures to that of planetary systems, he raises the cosmological question through an articulation of the miniscule. Ludovico thinks smaller; for him, the play of particles and forces best represents the ludic impulse. Warhol too thinks on a smaller scale: "Just a little piece.....smaller.....smaller" (*Philosophy*, epigraph). Particles in an observation chamber, Dorothy, Edie, Ondine, Arthur and Donald ricochet off one another for the protracted gaze of Warhol's lens. Tomorrow can bring only more of the same. A lifetime of undocumented future afternoons poses the threat of an unregistered life while eliciting satisfaction at what has been captured.

### Lost in Space

Hegel shares none of Schlegel's faith in the productive power of Romanticism, which for him brings Spirit's sojourn in the medium of art to a

terminus by instituting an insuperable divide between subject and object. While art itself as a discipline cannot survive the implementation of this schism, religion can, and in essence takes over where art leaves off. In Hegel's system or *Wissenschaft*, presented in both his *Aesthetics* and his *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, art can progress no further when inwardness, or *Innerlichkeit*, loses its desire to achieve expression through the world of objects and rests satisfied in its own otherness to that reality.<sup>23</sup> When inwardness reaches this terminal point, the role of art in providing a contemplative medium for *Geist* is eradicated in favor of religion, which now takes on the awesome responsibility of providing *Geist* with a means for achieving self-consciousness. For Hegel, numerous processes occur in *Geist*'s journey through sensuousness; the organic collation and coordination of these individual trajectories thickens into the rich and progressive universe of Spirit's unfolding and coming to know itself absolutely. First, Spirit makes the previously mentioned move from art to religion to philosophy, using and discarding each medium as it progresses toward the ideal point of absolute knowledge. Second, art itself, after having been chosen as Spirit's temporary dwelling, divides into the field of the fine arts, or *Kunst*; on this voyage, "art" fragments into the progression Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music and Poetry. Traversing this range carries art from usefulness to uselessness, with poetry becoming the point of contact between an expiring art and a burgeoning religion (in fact, poetry represents art's *dernier cri*—an utterance both mournful and anticipatory). Along with this generic transition comes the third move from Symbolism to Classicism to Romanticism; fundamentally architectural, Symbolism

---

<sup>23</sup> For this chapter, I have used both T.M. Knox's translation of Hegel's *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) and Bernard Bosanquet's translation of the Introduction to Hegel's *Aesthetics* as *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics* (London: Penguin Books, 1993).

bleeds into a sculptural Classicism, after which the triad of painting, music and poetry closes out the possibilities of Romanticism. Together, these three microprocesses merge into the streamlined mega-process which defines the gyrations of Spirit on its way to becoming Absolute. In this schema, “end,” Arthur Danto’s catchword, possesses two fundamental meanings, that of an aim, goal or final cause (Aristotle), and that of a cessation. Hence the postmodern catchphrase “the end of art” acquires a double meaning, referring both to art’s ceasing to be after it has exploited and exhausted sensuality, and also to the *telos* (for Hegel, *Zweck*) of the artistic process.

In Hegel’s schema, inwardness figures prominently, representing (1) a subsumed meaning or significance (*Bedeutung*) striving for expression via artistic content (*Inhalt*); (2) the subjectivity of the individual artist, whose job it is to externalize his inner life in the phenomena of the shared world, and (3) the spiritual interior of *Geist*, which actualizes the idea of its existence through a self-contemplation possible only when its negativity is alienated in the materials of positive existence. The work of art, whichever genre it participate in or *zeitgeist* it embody, coalesces multiple tasks into the work of art-making. Of a piece with the organic density which is the hallmark of the Hegelian system, art has its end in both itself and in the workings of personal (the individual artist) and historical (world-spirit) processes. In fact, the concept of organicism first developed by the German Idealists whose work precedes Hegel’s (Fichte, Schelling) and which is brought to Britain with Coleridge’s *Biographia Literaria* and to France with Germaine de Stael’s *D’Allemagne*, is borne out by the multiple existences of the individual work of art. This work pleases not only itself (its significance bubbles to the surface), but also the

creative genius (a subjective self finds adequate representation in an object) and Spirit (its successive alienations and objectifications in the things of the material world cannot take place without the production of particular works). Hegel's organicism is irrepressible, as the words of Hegelian commentator Michael Inwood underscore:

Hegel often compares the growth of spirit to that of a plant: a plant begins as a seed in which its nature or concept is only implicit, passes through various phases of growth, and eventually realizes explicitly the concept implicit in the seed. This analogy explains why the final form of spirit (spirit expressed in thought) supplies a "principle of division" for the "science of art," why, that is, the stages leading up to this final form have their "ground" in this "idea" (*Begriff*): the concept of spirit, like the concept encoded in a seed, specifies and generates not only the final form (the fully realized concept), but also the stages by which it is reached (170).<sup>24</sup>

As in other of Hegel's writings, such as his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the metaphor of the seed provides the basis for existential *richesse*. Making inevitable the elaborate coordination of developmental stages and ontological passages, the image of the seed on which his organicism rests constitutes an irreducible, axiomatic feature of his thought.

In Hegel's version of how to thematize and unify the seemingly prolific and at times incommensurable activities of artists as they and their creations span the centuries, the triad "Symbolism—Classicism—Romanticism" takes on the formidable

---

<sup>24</sup> Implicit in Inwood's observation is the Hegelian notion of the difference between Idea (*Idee*) and Concept (*Begriff*). For Hegel, an Idea is an actualized concept (i.e. a concept which has managed to achieve full expression in the world). Thus all ideas are seedlike, in that they entail a necessary ontogeny.

job of accounting for the world-history of an art cutting across epochs, cultures and temporal divides. A productive way to trace this pattern would be first to posit Symbolism as an artistic response to the radical inadequacy of material form to function as the home of Spirit. This inadequacy finds itself transcended in Classicism, for which there does exist a sensuous form capable of expressing perfectly the subjectivity and content of Spirit. Finally, Romanticism occurs at the end of the loop, identified as the moment Spirit once again finds dissatisfaction in the shortcomings of physicality and can only express its essence via a sick complaint and mordant irony. This call spurs religion to open itself to the proliferations of Spirit. Culturally, Hegel allots symbolic expression to Eastern populations, finding its traces in Zoroasterianism, Indian, Mohammedan and Hebrew poetry, and Christian mysticism. Giving rise to the sublime, symbolism plays out the drama of plastic insufficiency, or the inadequacy of matter to express the divine. Unable to provide adequate objectivity for Spirit (defined as a pure negativity mysteriously impelled to negate its negativity), Symbolism can at best provide “vicious untrue determinateness” (CV, 82). The failure of the symbolic to signify without remainder generates sublimity: “These aspects may be pronounced in general terms to constitute the character of the primitive artistic pantheism of the East, which either charges even the meanest objects with the absolute import, or again coerces nature with violence into the expression of its view. By this means it becomes bizarre, grotesque and tasteless, or turns the infinite but abstract freedom of the substantive Idea disdainfully against all phenomenal being as null and evanescent” (CV, 83). By the expression “vicious determinism,” Hegel posits the symbol as effecting the objectification of

Spirit only through the pain of inhabiting a misrepresentative form which can only damage it. The violence of this act of expression lies in its abuse of Spirit, which comes to disdain “phenomenal being” only because coercion into becoming finite limits it too much (its freedom is compromised). Grottesqueness, far from being innocuous, playful or Raphaellesque, is all that can result from Spirit’s contortions. Unable to achieve the proper adequation of the inner with the outer, Spirit can only manifest itself with hyperbole and monstrosity. Announcing its impotence, the sublime presents a sequence of spectacular failures.

The inability of the symbolic form to give a nondistorted presentation of Spirit is perhaps rectified a little too perfectly by Classicism, which excels so marvelously at giving expression to Spirit that after its sun is set, Spirit loses all yearning to make itself known through the sensuous:

In the second form of art, which we propose to call *Classical*, the double effect of symbolic art is cancelled. The plastic shape of symbolic art is imperfect, because, in the first place, the Idea in it only enters into consciousness in *abstract* determinateness or indeterminateness, and, in the second place, this must always make the conformity of shape to import defective, and in its turn merely abstract. The classical form of art is the solution of this double difficulty; it is the free and adequate embodiment of the Idea in the shape that, according to its conception, is peculiarly appropriate to the Idea itself. With it, therefore, the Idea is capable of entering into free and complete accord. Hence, the classical type of art is the first to afford the production and intuition of the completed Ideal, and to establish it as a realized fact (CVI, 84).

In the case of Classicism, Spirit no longer finds itself mutilated by a sensuous form imprisoning its boundlessness in a concrete particular which can only negatively express its grandeur via sublimity. Glorifying in the material world, Spirit finally presents itself as Ideal beauty (in Hegel's parlance, Beauty's passage from abstract Concept to fleshed-out Idea). Working primarily through personification and anthropomorphism, the Classicism of Greek culture gives Spirit a human countenance and torso. Through its perfection of the human form, Greek sculpture thereby makes sensuousness a thoroughly satisfactory medium through which Spirit can objectify itself and make itself knowable. In Greek sculpture, "the inward and spiritual are first revealed in their eternal repose and essential self-completeness"; unbroken "by the play of trivialities and passions," a solidified Spirit realizes the ideal of beauty through the beautiful human figure (CX, 92). No longer vicious in its determinism (i.e., rendering determinate the indeterminate), art transcends the violence of Symbolic form through the perfection of the sculptural surface, which through its beauty best reflects the beauty of Spirit. Bounded, yet still free, *Geist* no longer suffers the demolition of its content by an inhospitable form. Beauty succeeds where sublimity fails.

Finally, Romantic form survives the dissolution of Classicism, making the question of Spirit's productive alienation in the realm of the sensuous merely rhetorical. With Romanticism, art ceases to sustain ontological relevance, its sensuousness becoming undesirable as the prime matrix through which consciousness condenses into self-consciousness. Occurring as an afterthought to Classicism, the Romantic type gives expression to a secondary inadequacy reflective of material

form's impotence in Symbolism, yet unique in its rephrasing the sublime not in terms of "vicious determinism," but rather in terms of languor, melancholy and irony (sublimity #2). In Romantic art, *Innerlichkeit* loses interest in the sensory world, whose objects can never sufficiently reflect or sustain the workings of Spirit. Coincident with the historical emergence of Christian art, Romantic art begins its history by discovering the principle of inner subjectivity, a notion foreign to Greek thought, which never posits a principle of inwardness:

For at the stage of romantic art the spirit knows that its truth does not consist in its immersion in corporeality; on the contrary, it only becomes sure of its truth by withdrawing from the external into its own intimacy with itself and positing external reality as an existence inadequate to itself. Even if, therefore, this new content too comprises in itself the task of making itself *beautiful*, still beauty in the sense hitherto expounded remains for it something subordinate, and beauty becomes the *spiritual* beauty of the absolute inner life as inherently infinite spiritual subjectivity (518).

Hence Hegel's definition of the Romantic as an art produced by a "Spirit certain of itself" (Behler and Struc, 25), for it is at this moment that the phenomenal world loses favor with a Spirit withdrawing into its own innermost furrows and recesses. Negating all things particular, Spirit finds materiality newly desolate and inhabitable, producing in the Romantic artist a vague despondence. Yet along with this despair a joy in externals results. As demonstrated by the Chivalric age, as well as by the Christian era, "absolute inwardness" has as its side effect a new worldliness. Acquiring absolute worth, the individual human person in whom subjectivity inheres

unexpectedly gains importance. "Empirical individuality," while canceling "effusion into the corporeal," inadvertently validates the finite world, which becomes the true home of a Spirit absolutely inwardized (520-521). Here worldliness manifests itself both in the chivalric praise of the mundane, as well as in the "formal independence of character" which experiences "its ups and down in capricious adventures" (528-528). The end result of art's turn toward the Romantic is ultimately the end of art altogether, which expires with the buzzing efflorescence of the worldly.

At this point, irony supervenes, saving the human subject the indignity of alienating itself in the arabesque-like proliferation of concrete particulars. Irony makes possible the view that the phenomenal play of appearances or semblances constitutes reality.<sup>25</sup> Of course the appearance of irony is no solution to the problem of Spirit's unfolding. Since art has only existed so that Spirit might undergo important mistakes and *méconnaissances*, art was always meant to be transcended. Witnessing that transcendence, the Romantic artist treats contingency with comedy, arriving at the state of objective humor.<sup>26</sup> The radical inwardness of the artist in the Romantic era produces humor in that the "spiritual worth" of personality enters into

---

<sup>25</sup> "This amounts to making all that is actual in its own right a mere *semblance*, not true and real for its own sake and by its own means, but a mere appearance due to the I, within whose power and caprice it remains, and at its free disposal" (LXXXVIII, 71). "Semblance" is the translation of *Schein*, a word connoting both a shining and an appearing. See also Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: in a Series of Letters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) on this point, especially Letter XXVI, in which *Schein* is related to the play-drive, or *Spieltrieb*.

<sup>26</sup> This species of the comical is the same cherished by Breton: "The man who links Rimbaud and Apollinaire, in this last respect as in so many others, is Jarry, who is also the first poet who is steeped in the teachings of Lautréamont, and in whom the struggle between the two forces which by turn tended to dominate art in the Romantic era was fought and suddenly became crucial: the force that made the accidents of the outer world a matter of interest on the one hand, and on the other hand the force that made the caprices of personality a matter of interest. The intimate interpenetration of these two tendencies, which more or less alternate in Lautréamont, in Jarry's case ends in the triumph of *objective humour*, which is their dialectical resolution" (*Surrealist Situation of the Object*, 266). Breton also goes on to posit an "objective chance" through which a necessity bordering on synchronicity is revealed. See his *Manifestoes of Surrealism* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972).

the materials of production. The “bizarrerie(s)” and “jests” of the Romantic artist make humor central to the artistic enterprise, which in the era of Spirit’s revulsion for the phenomenal world reflects the comedy of alienated human subjectivity (601). While at first humor is subjective, it ultimately exits the circuit of art as an objective entity through which the artist plays with the human subject’s contingency: “But if this satisfaction in externality or in the subjective portrayal is intensified, according to the principle of romantic art, into the heart’s deeper immersion in the object, and if, on the other hand, what matters to humour is the object and its configuration within its subjective reflex, then we acquire thereby a growing intimacy with the object, a sort of *objective* humour” (609). Abandoned in objects, the *sapiens* heart finds humor in both the contingencies of existence and in the ontological fact of existence. Still “inward,” this subject gives itself away through dissolution in the concrete particulars comprising the worldly, none of which catch it for long. Like the Romantic Irony championed by Schlegel, the subjective and objective humours of Hegel result when an ideal is located at a significant remove from the real.<sup>27</sup> A conduit for the ridiculousness of the arabesque, irony and humour are the last stand of the Romantic artist, who finds the world inadequate yet can only get lost in its contours.

---

<sup>27</sup> Hegel is not particularly sympathetic to Schlegel’s position: “The proximate form of this negativity which displays itself as irony is, then, on the one hand the futility of all that is matter of fact, or moral and of substantive import in itself; the nothingness of all that is objective, and that has essential and actual value. If the I remains at this point of view, all appears to it as nothing worth and as futile, excepting its own subjectivity, which thereby becomes hollow and empty, and itself mere conceit. But on the other hand, the reverse may happen, and the I may also find itself unsatisfied in its enjoyment of itself, and may prove insufficient to itself, so as in consequence to feel a craving for the solid and substantial, for determinate and essential interests. Out of this there arises misfortune and antinomy...” (XC, 72).

## Total Oblivion

Contemplating Warhol in light of Hegel's aesthetic postulates makes new sense of Warhol's own complicated relationship to products and commodities, while also providing a framework for discussing the object relations of various Warhol Superstars—particularly fractured narcissist and Warhol double Edie Sedgwick. Using his products to celebrate the objects of consumerism, Warhol returns art to the thick of life. He embodies the Romanticism of Hegel, with its half-hearted fall into worldliness. Although Danto follows the Hegelian program of art's necessary self-obviation, he does not pay enough attention to Romanticism's role in the enactment of that closure. Tracing Danto back to his Hegelian roots allows Romanticism to surface as the cause of art's decline and eventual end, making possible a richer expostulation upon Warhol's own Romantic, world-ending proclivities. Among all Warhol's creations, his film *Vinyl* best dramatizes the absolute inwardness characteristic of the Romantic personality. Of particular interest are the actions of the film's accidental star Edie Sedgwick, who, though billed as an "extra," steals the show with her radical inability to connect with the objects of the external world.<sup>28</sup> Abandoning herself in one "thing" after another, she is Hegel's objective humourist come to life. The present participle belongs to her; fidgeting, rummaging, spilling, dropping, playing, her seemingly pointless actions become more arresting than the erotic and violent activities flanking her. In this tableau, Edie's radical inability to

---

<sup>28</sup> During *Vinyl*, characters are introduced by voiceover: "Victor is played by Gerard Malanga," etc. These voiceovers take place without warning, and are a crucial source of interruption. Surprisingly, Edie is identified as only an extra, although the film becomes her "vehicle." As so often happens in Warhol, the creature at the margins absorbs all attention. The periphery is where the action's at.

connect with the spatiotemporal events in her immediate sensory range stands out. These pass her by almost without registering at all. While potentially eye-popping occurrences, such as sadomasochistic abuse and the horrors of psychological reconditioning, go unnoticed, seemingly banal non-events, like the appearance of a roll of electrical tape by Tosh Carillo in the film's last moments, fill her consciousness entirely—but not for long. Dripping wax and asphyxiating plastic not so much bore her as fail to present themselves mentally to her, while black adhesive mesmerizes her utterly. It is thus with Edie Sedgwick's relation to reality that this chapter closes. Balanced against previous descriptions of her persona and behavior in *Afternoon*, it adds to a portrait already sketched out (Edie as urban bohemian with her hip friends) while covering new psychic terrain (Edie as dissociated drifter). As a Hegalian princess, Edie represents a Romantic point of no return; the outer and inner space of her mind and its cognitive map emblemize the end of art in a subjectivity perfectly inwardized.<sup>29</sup>

Based however loosely on Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*, Warhol's *Vinyl* tells the story of juvenile delinquent Victor's sociopathic tendencies and their supposed erasure by modern psychological techniques of aversion therapy (despite the fact that these methods only inspire masochism and learned helplessness). Played by poet and Warholian assistant Gerard Malanga, Victor speaks a variant of that

---

<sup>29</sup> After *Vinyl*, *Outer and Inner Space* (shot July 1965) presents the best look at Edie's fragmented ego. In this film, we watch Edie responding to her own screen image, an object which has obviously taken on a life of its own, standing apart from her as a foreign presence. As in *Vinyl* (shot March 1965), Edie plays with materiality—only this time, she herself has become a piece of matter, a *ding-an-sich*. Like *The Chelsea Girls*, *Outer and Inner Space* was originally intended as a split-screen production. Quadrupling Edie (there are two Edies per screen), it echoes the twinning of Mary Woronov ("Hanoi Hannah and Guests" runs by the side of "Hanoi Hannah (The Queen of China).") Serially reproduced people succeed soup and Coca Cola multiples: more is better. So too the Mona Lisa multiplies: *Thirty Are Better Than One* (1963).

oddly hip language perfected by *A Clockwork Orange*'s protagonist Alex: other characters are addressed as "Scumbaby"; "the old in out" becomes "the old up yours"; "juvenile delinquent," Victor's internal and external identity, becomes the acronym "JD" ("I am a JD—So what?"), and the trendy language of the 60s meets the not-so-trendy 50s ("The squares do good because they dig it."). Denizen of a post-literate world, Victor starts the film off by verbally and physically accosting a magazine-toting newsie: "It is uncommon to find someone who reads," he arrogantly comments moments before his assault will commence.<sup>30</sup> Punished for his alleged literacy, this man is quickly whisked off to a back corner of the room, where he is soon subjected to the mysteries of pain by Victor's JD associates. Witnessed by a dandyistic figure with a Dr. Evil laugh ("The Cop"), Victor is not far from his comeuppance; shortly after the avatar of a dead literacy has begun to be wrapped in clear plastic by random S/M ghouls, Victor is forced to sign a contract by this character, who represents, in his own words, "the tender bosom of the law."<sup>31</sup> Tosh Carillo now arrives, assuming the role of doctor.<sup>32</sup> As medic, his immediate job is to de- and reprogram Victor, a task best accomplished by zippering his head into a leather mask and forcing him to watch a screen on which images of violence are paraded (it is actually a spinning disco globe), all while he is corporeally abused:

---

<sup>30</sup> Although this character carries a load of magazines (*Playboys*, according to Stephen Koch), he is still heralded as one holding "books" by Victor: given Warhol's continual blurring of the hi/lo border, this category error is certainly purposeful and worth noting. If regarding magazines as books involves a leap of faith, so too does the film's later use of a spinning mirror ball as movie screen on which Victor sees various "ultraviolet" scenarios while being salubriously forced to endure pain. Such leaps make the film less reality-based, cutting against their reading as mere "slice of life" productions.

<sup>31</sup> That Victor signs a contract recalls the famous contracts signed by Severin in Masoch's *Venus in Furs*. The role of the contract in the S/M scenario is crucial. True Sadism, such as that practiced by de Sade's libertines, requires no such document.

<sup>32</sup> Tosh Carillo is Warhol's Puerto Rican star (in company with Mario Montez and Holly Woodlawn); he also stars as Mex in *Horse*, shot the same month as *Vinyl* (March). According to Ronnie Tavel, Tosh is a "real-life" sadist who for a day job "worked in a florist's shop that specialized in funeral wreaths" (Bourdon, 203).

“Not very pretty—you like it?” Cut off from oxygen, burned with wax, and forced to drink a mystery substance through a funnel, Victor is refashioned into some sort of juvenile nondelinquent (or else further perverted—the fruits of this therapy are dubious at best). Upon administering these procedures, the Doctor forces Victor to inhale amyl nitrate, and begins to cut his epicene curls with a pair of scissors produced from the interior of a medical bag. What happens next will never be known. The Kinks’ song “Tired of Waiting for You” silences all chatter, and is the film’s concluding noise (it replaces Martha and the Vandella’s “Nowhere to Run,” which sonically dominates Reel 1).<sup>33</sup> Tosh makes a bracelet for Edie out of his tape, cast members get high on poppers, and Gerard’s prized poet’s mane meets the cold cutting blade of a surgical apparatus turned beautician’s device.<sup>34</sup> Softer, more feminine, Tosh conducts what might become a haircutting party; completely out of it, Victor wouldn’t know the difference.<sup>35</sup>

While the action described in this paragraph might sound engrossing (or even repelling), for Edie Sedgwick it does not even register as banal. Sub-boring, incapable of generating even minimal or fleeting interest, they cannot fill a

---

<sup>33</sup> Musically, Reel 2 devolves to chaos; not unified around a repeated track, it instead relies upon a mixed bag of possibly radio tunes, among which The Kinks’ song repeats at odd intervals. While most critics pay attention to “Nowhere to Run” because of its obvious import for Victor and the film’s other captive(s), I find the Kinks’ song even more disturbing because of its bubblegum quality. Juxtaposed with the action in Reel 2, it produces a chilling effect. Like Edie, the music bears no reference to the events at hand. It too emerges from an alternate reality.

<sup>34</sup> Amyl Nitrate is not the film’s first drug; previous to its inhalation, a joint has made the rounds.

<sup>35</sup> An interesting feature of Tosh’s performances in both *Horse* and *Vinyl* is that in each he demonstrates an ability to switch from butch to femme at a moment’s notice. In *Horse*, this tendency is displayed by his response to Maria Callas’ voice. Though a Mexican *bandito* for most of the film, the minute the opera music begins he poses, lip synchs, camps it up. On another note, one particularly rich aspect of Warhol multigeneric work is the way his products reference one another. The haircutting session at the end of *Vinyl* references his silent film *Haircut* (1963); the cat named “Horse” in *Beauty #2* evokes the horse of *Horse*, and the romping figures on the Factory sofa in *Couch* (1964) “do it” in front of a Warhol floral canvas. The interplay of these surfaces points to the continuity of Warhol’s thought, which, though farmed out to multiple genres and projects, refers to itself and its continuity.

subjectivity “sure of itself” in the Hegelian lingo. Self-grounded, Edie does travel outside herself at various moments to abandon her consciousness in the random, inconsequential objects which come her way. For most of the film, she merely sits atop a trunk drinking a cocktail and smoking a cigarette, dressed in her characteristic black leotard with a spotted scarf tied around her waist.<sup>36</sup> How she has managed to intrude upon the sacred male-male S/M space is a question left unanswered and unposed. Her presence is likewise ignored by the men around her, whose interactions concern mainly the passing of objects from body to body (for example, she is handed a joint, a candle) and the cleaning up of her messes (when she drops her can, the Cop is there to retrieve it, and when she knocks over Tosh’s medical bag, it too is retrieved by another). All in all, Edie remains wholly clueless about her surroundings, and is thus not entirely sure how to behave. Is she connected to an intersubjective reality, or has her mind launched her into solipsist innerspace? When one character hands her a lit candle, she holds it rather half-heartedly, unclear as to how it has appeared or what its use will be. She soon passes it on to Tosh, who immediately uses it to burn his victim with wax. Does this act of transmission make Edie a member of the S/M scenario? Included yet unaware of her inclusion, she passes along the instrument of pain without any awareness of her role in that transition. When handed a magazine, she does not even possess the minimum energy necessary to flip through it, handing it nonchalantly off to Victor. Although she mediates between two tableaux (Tosh/newsboy and Tosh/Victor), she demonstrates no cognizance of her involvement in either. Subject rent asunder from all objects, she inhabits a world in which her

---

<sup>36</sup> Like the trunk in Hitchcock’s *Rope* (1948), it too might contain a corpse. On the same plane as *Vinyl*’s medical bag, Edie’s trunk will never disclose its contents.

presence is excrescent yet undeniably present (it is “there,” and cannot be thought away).

Comically, the one object to arrest Edie’s attention is Tosh’s medical bag. When this item is left next to her on the trunk, she cannot help but gaze wistfully at its interior, whose secrets she desperately wishes to glean. Later she will produce her own bag, and although she will temporarily rifle through it in search of some object-of-the-moment, her consciousness strays to Tosh’s. The only interest she displays throughout the film is directed to two objects, both produced by Tosh: the medical bag and the electrical tape. These objects surprise her subjectivity and reel it in; they are her stopping points. Otherwise, all people and things remain radically external to her. Outside of these two objects, her responsiveness is triggered only by the film’s soundtrack: suddenly the woman cut off from people and matter begins to move in sync with the rhythm. Later on in the film, when all that can be seen is an agonizing close-up of Victor’s torture, Edie’s arm intrudes carelessly upon the action, tracing out delicate and perfectly interspaced arcs of air.<sup>37</sup> Almost biological, her response to the sounds of Martha and the Vandellas and the Kinks constitutes an odd moment of miscontextualized beauty: while the newsboy and Victor suffer physical and mental trauma, she is so out of it as to initiate a dance party of one. Initially, Victor, too, connects with the music, flossing with an energetic frug; it is only later on in the film that he is unable to appreciate and respond to the music because of his bondage. Thus while Edie does possibly connect with Victor during the film’s first dance sequence, his subsequent immobility has no effect on her own desire to embody the beat.

---

<sup>37</sup> In this sense, her arm mimes the microphone in *Horse*. Like Edie’s arm, it too comes from off-camera and intrudes upon the action. In *Horse*, the intrusion is markedly phallic, and appears to attack The Kid as he unsuccessfully urges his horse to neigh.

Unmoved by the vista of his pain, she continues her musical engagement whether or not her dance partner is able to respond. Yet despite her mental unmovability, what remains unclear is whether or not she courts any dangers herself by hanging out among these goons and sex freaks. If she is an ingénue, then perhaps she too might face Sadean humiliation; if she is a naïf, then it might be possible for the unfolding scene of suffering to finally absorb her and force her subjugation as well. Shortly after the screen goes white in the film's second reel, a startling development presents itself: Edie is suddenly flanked by a predatory leather daddy who has perhaps arrived to punish her for her obliviousness. While for a moment one is left to wonder at Edie's fate in the arms of this man, to gasp at her imminent peril, her insularity saves her, and the two of them dance. Moving with him, her physical and emotional disinvestiture in her environment and in him make it clear that she still occupies her own plane. Her spaciness disarms him completely, making the bear a child's toy.

Watching Edie exit the S/M circuit unscathed, unbothered and unmoved, we find ourselves witness to the Hegelian spectacle of complete subjective inwardization. While an object like a candle, magazine or purse might temporarily cause her consciousness to travel and alight outside itself somewhere extrasubjective, these moments of connection are short-lived and simply cannot persist over any substantial length of time. All-Spirit, she links up only with the non-material medium of music, which speaks to her unique ontology in a way that solid objects, even when those objects are people, cannot.<sup>38</sup> For Edie, there is no threat from the outside because

---

<sup>38</sup> "The *second* art in which the romantic type realizes itself is contrasted with painting, and is music. Its medium, though still sensuous, yet develops into still more thorough subjectivity and particularization. Music, too, treats the sensuous as ideal, and does so by negating and idealizing into

there is no outside. Objects are unremarkable and blasé because, in true Romantic style, she has transcended the necessity to find herself in them, to comprehend herself through them. Like the Romantic artist who, for Hegel, carries art to its limit, Edie achieves irony, ambivalence, even a certain saintlihood. Radically separate from the things of the intersubjective world, she has receded from them, only to return momentarily to them at random moments of outwardization. A reflection of Warhol's own odd attraction/repulsion to material entities, Edie performs Romantic disengagement. Amyl nitrate can only make the mists of her mind thicker. Able to focus only on the inconsequential, Edie cannot get beyond the electrical tape produced by Tosh and fashioned into a bracelet for her. In fact, after it has become a bracelet, she wants more, taking the entire roll of tape from Tosh, grand provider of intoxicants. The mysterious medical bag has produced these wonders. Its contents, the primary object of her curiosity, are all in the world that speak to her. Having found herself, there is no reason to lose herself—and so she squanders herself on the trivial, which demands nothing of her. Through Edie, the last moments of art's life within history solidify. After this point, there will be no further need for a revolutionary art addressed to a historical present as it gazes toward an ideal future. Ending with the subjective detachment of Romanticism, such an art undergoes a spectacular fragmentation whose shards will not be assembled into any mosaic. Having become an object, art loses interest in materiality; for now, it will continue beyond the zone of revolutionary hope and chaos that had once defined an epoch's

---

the individual isolation of a single point, the indifferent externality of space, whose complete semblance is accepted and imitated by painting" (Hegel, *Introductory Lectures*, CXIII, 94).

critical momentum. Numb, dumb, yet brilliant, Edie slides down her black hole with an experiential innocence worthy of the best Sadean criminal.

# **/elements**

## 2.1 Counter-revolution

Cabbed up to the Iranian embassy (\$2.50). There were no demonstrators out in front. Inside I saw Otto Preminger again and it was the second or third time in a few days, so he asked me what we were going to do tomorrow. I posed for pictures with the queen in front of my portrait of her. She said she was jealous of Hoveyda because he had eight Warhols and she only had four. The queen is taller than me (*Diaries*, Thursday, July 7, 1977).

### Let Them Eat Hot Dogs

Warhol enervates the impetus to revolt. Through him, its oomph dissipates. No longer encouraged to overturn a sedimented and oppressive order, the artist after Warhol is instead charged with the more contemporary responsibility of hedonism. The Warholian legacy produces a vibrant wordliness; rather than critique the status quo, the artist as envisioned by Warhol exists to sample the pleasures of the dominant classes, not to *épater le bourgeoisie*, to liquidate those in power or to reject the fallen present in favor of an optimized future. Entering their rarefied spaces, breathing their air, sipping their champagne, Warhol the socialite dedicates much of his career to capturing the upper echelons in images and words—this despite a deep awareness of his project's decadence, as shown by the original title of his 1979 book of celebrity photographs *Exposures*, which was *Social Disease*.<sup>1</sup> Recording their every move, he documents the dramas and banalities of the fortunate few with paintings like the

---

<sup>1</sup> In *Holy Terror: Andy Warhol Close Up* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000), Bob Colacello explains the history of the title "Social Disease": "*Social Disease* was what we wanted the book to be called. It perfectly captured the tongue-in-cheek tone of the text and the photographs, and made fun of Andy's obsessive partying and the world of discos and society in general... Andy loved it, Fred loved it, Chris, Brigid, and I loved it—and for a while, Grosset loved it. Then someone at B. Dalton, the all-powerful bookstore chain, said they'd have to order fewer copies for their suburban and small-town stores if that was the title, and we settled on *Exposures* for lack of anything snappier. We also threw out our first cover: a black-and-white snapshot of Jackie Onassis and Bianca visiting Liza backstage with *Social Disease* stamped across it in bright red" (420-421).

Celebrity Portraits and writings like the *Diaries* or *Andy Warhol's Party Book*.<sup>2</sup> Hence we learn about Jerry Hall's B.O., Halston's assignments and Liza Minnelli's cocaine abuse, while discovering how to behave at "weddings, funerals, art openings, charities, etc.": these blips dominate the radar screen of post-history.<sup>3</sup> Dissolving the revolutionary impulse, Warhol also dispels its accompanying psychological and existential baggage: anxiety, alienation, anomie. Yet Warhol is nothing if not thorough. True to form, he rejects revolution while setting up revolutionary heroes like Mao Tse-tung (*Mao Wallpaper*, 1974), Vladimir Lenin (*Lenin*, 1986) and Ethel and Julius Rosenberg (their invisible glutes haunt electric chair images like *Lavender Disaster*, 1963) and revolutionary icons like the Communist hammer and sickle (*Hammer and Sickle*, 1977) as celebrated entities in their own right. Demonstrating that capitalism has room for even its most ferocious opponents, Warhol represents the great absorptiveness of flexible accumulation: under the sway of what Ernest Mandel refers to as late capitalism, everyone and everything are theoretically collectible, even those personae and items most resistant to commodification.<sup>4</sup> The road to liberty

---

<sup>2</sup> According to Bravo's documentary *The Whole Warhol* (2002), each portrait was 40" by 40" so that one day all could be connected into a quilted whole. Such an *assemblage* smacks of the two elements of totalitarian society outlined by Arendt in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harvest Books, 1976): gullibility and cynicism (see "The Totalitarian Movement," 382-388).

<sup>3</sup> "Weddings, Funerals, Art Openings, Charities, Etc." is the seventh chapter of Warhol's and Hackett's *Andy Warhol's Party Book* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1988). This posthumous book functions both as social diary and Castiglione-quality etiquette book: "Going to funerals is a good way to remember who's dead. I try to avoid funerals, but if you don't go to them it's easy to forget who's in heaven—acquaintances die and three months later I'm back to asking people how they are" (130).

<sup>4</sup> In *Postmodernism*, Jameson summarizes Mandel's economic schema as laid out in his book *Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1999). The three phases of capitalism are: (1) market capitalism, (2) imperialism, and (3) late or multinational capitalism ("Culture," 35). Passing from one form to another, capital grows purer and purer, permeating life more fully with each morphological leap. "This purer capitalism of our own time thus eliminates the enclaves of precapitalist organization it had hitherto tolerated and exploited in a tributary way. One is tempted to speak in this connection of a new and historically original penetration and colonization of Nature and the Unconscious: that is, the destruction of precapitalist Third World agriculture by the Green Revolution, and the rise of the media and the advertising industry" (36).

ends with the comforts of consumption. Occupying a vertiginous *cul de sac*, the pleasures of the flesh and of exchange value loop around and around, numbing their consumers into eschewing the progressive in favor of the static. That this terminus is desirable might come across as a repulsive proposition, but Andy Warhol demands that it not be taken lightly. Whether or not the revolution has ended, the capitalist subject is sufficiently insulated from the pressure to rise up, thereby forestalling the implementation of change in favor of sensual enjoyment and its scintillating immediacy.

Children of the Romantics, we find ourselves subscribing to notions of the aesthetic or poetic act as dissolving the rulebook of normalcy to create an alternate, less restrictive order. Following an osmotic law, freedom is made to flow from areas of high to low pressure. Such is the legacy of modern thinking, a mentality indebted to the notion of revolution—and such is Warhol’s assault on the modern mind with its counter-revolutionary tendencies (his love of Imelda Marcos and the Shah of Iran, among other imperials). Radicalized, the revolutionary idea produces the possibility of bloodshed without end (for example, Trotsky’s notion of “permanent revolution”).<sup>5</sup> Yet as Hannah Arendt points out in *On Revolution*, the concept of revolution is itself fatally flawed as a result of a constitutive internal incoherence. Strangely enough, Warhol seems to intuit this knowledge, recognizing the bankruptcy of revolutionary ideology. Given that the act of revolution itself institutes its own foundational

---

<sup>5</sup> “The form of government the two movements developed (Nazism, Communism), or, rather, which almost automatically developed from their double claim to total domination and global rule, is best characterized by Trotsky’s slogan of ‘permanent revolution’ although Trotsky’s theory was no more than socialist forecast of a series of revolutions, from the antifeudal bourgeois to the antibourgeois proletarian, which would spread from one country to the other” (*The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 389). While Stalin rejects permanent revolution in favor of “socialism in one country,” his mania for the purge testifies otherwise.

principles as the basis of a new status quo (*novus ordo saeculorum*), revolution seduces its adherents into believing that they are acting in the service of abstract principles like justice or *fraternité* (or, in art, “abstraction” or “form”), when all they are accomplishing is making way for the latest social monolith. Since revolution must insulate its fruits from the threat of future revolutions, it performs the dual tasks of supplanting an established order while instituting a new one (true anarchy is thus not feasible, since lack of order is also order). Even an idealist like Trotsky, for whom permanent revolution tantalizes with promises of manifest destiny, is doomed to hypocrisy and failure. What this means for the revolutionary idealist (or even the player Arendt identifies as “the professional revolutionist”) is that, for true revolution to take place, there can be no new lasting institution of order, since each time an order sediments it must be subjected to new destabilizations.<sup>6</sup> For Arendt, Revolution is almost always a conservative affair whose goal is to re-stabilize and re-institute.<sup>7</sup> As a cultural example, future-oriented texts like Wordsworth’s Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Shelley’s *Defence of Poetry* or William Blake’s *Jerusalem* are not revolutionary, since they make no provision for future revolution; their assumption is that the changes they recommend can rectify poetic and social conditions sufficiently to free the imagination from its fetters once and for all. A political instance would be

---

<sup>6</sup> For Arendt, the professional revolutionist is the one who, detached from the social conditions which plunge the world into revolutionary chaos in the first place, observes and speculates from the safety of an ivory tower. The Professional Revolutionist is the ideologue; out of touch with the reality he claims to represent, he treats revolution as a thought experiment. In his detachment, the Professional Revolutionist thus parallels the situation of the Hegelian *philosophe*, who does not act, but contemplates (hence Kierkegaard’s critique of Hegel as the spectator of history). See Arendt’s *On Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1990)—specifically “The Revolutionary Tradition and Its Lost Treasure,” 258-275.

<sup>7</sup> Revolution’s basic shortcoming is that it fails to found a social organ; in other words, there has been no way to embody a principle of radical change within the social order created by the actions of the French, Bolshevik or American revolutionaries. While temporary organs, such as the French *sociétés révolutionnaires*, Bolshevik *soviets* or Jeffersonian wards do spring up, they are fast liquidated by those who have, via revolution, gained power.

Marx's famous end of history after class conflict finally disappears. That Marx envisions a cessation to struggle and progress points to the conservative truth of revolution, which, as Arendt underscores, never passes beyond its astronomical definition (revolution as circular or elliptical planetary orbit—as something regressive, fixed, charted).

Moreover, in her survey of the revolutionary tradition in the West, Arendt makes the piquant observation that, to its detriment, the American Revolution has culminated not in freedom or liberty, but rather in the pursuit of happiness. Inescapably hedonistic, Americans are all too quick to relinquish any sense of the revolutionary, which ultimately has less to do with happiness than with social equity or human justice, both of which involve too much effort to qualify as inherently felicitous. What gets lost, according to Arendt, is the treasure of a revolutionary tradition—a situation made all the more urgent by Andy Warhol's status as post-revolutionary cultural giant, since his art and no other makes the Arendtian point so boldly:

The American dream, as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries under the impact of mass immigration came to understand it, was neither the dream of the American Revolution—the foundation of freedom—nor the dream of the French Revolution—the liberation of man; it was, unhappily, the dream of a “promised land” where milk and honey flow. And the fact that the development of modern technology was so soon able to realize this dream beyond anyone's wildest expectation quite naturally had the effect of confirming for the dreamers that they really had come to live in the best of all possible worlds (139).<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Significantly, this fantasy is the dream of the poor: “For abundance and endless consumption are the ideals of the poor: they are the mirage in the desert of misery” (139). Here Warhol's childhood poverty figures prominently; in the Arendtian critique, his state of disenfranchisedness opens him to

Andy Warhol is one of these dreamer-immigrants lost in the plenitude of mass production. Revolutionizing revolution, he cares only for the pleasures of consumption—even though, as his blasé attitude indicates, pleasure itself may qualify as a snooze. Replacing the desire to overturn social order with the desire to consume the many products of that order, Warhol represents the promise of the good life. For Warhol, art is not the pleasure of seizing the means of production from the bourgeoisie, nor of intervening in industrialism, but of consuming the products available to the haves. In true Arendtian form, Warhol rejects the modern idea that the artist function as visionary, prophet or social reformer. Becoming instead an artist who is first and foremost a master consumer, Warhol becomes an exemplar of aesthetic futurity. The full range of junk produced by Adorno’s abhorred “culture industry” now matters most, as Mona Lisa herself assumes a place between rhinoplastic “after” photographs (*Before and After* 3, 1962) and photo-booth multiples (*Ethel Scull Thirty-Six Times*, 1963).

Yet Warhol’s magic is that the pluralism he champions coincides with the post-revolutionary wonderland in which the Hegelian subject or Marxist ideologue frolic. Liberated from the exigencies of change, the fully cognizant Hegelian *Geist* and fully revolutionized Marxist laborer transcend conflict and achieve permanent stability. Their essences will no longer move. Since for Warhol an isomorphic situation develops (“isomorphic” in the word’s geometrical sense, as in the similarity of triangles), it is “as if” a revolution has occurred, despite the fact that society has

---

the mirage of endless consumability, giving birth to his aesthetics (as well as his economics—such is the genesis of the Warholian pack-rat).

not been overturned, but endorsed as-is.<sup>9</sup> For Marx, the division of labor cannot survive the end of history. As the split between the bourgeoisie and proletariat becomes obviated by the act of revolution, the need to divide labor among experts vanishes.<sup>10</sup> Suddenly everybody can do everything; questions of specialization appear to be extracted from an archaic language game no longer spoken:

For as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic (*The German Ideology*, 40).

In imitation of the Marx and Engels of *The German Ideology*, Danto wryly comments at the end his essay “The End of Art” that, in the post-revolutionary world, “you can be an abstractionist in the morning, a photorealist in the afternoon, a minimal

---

<sup>9</sup> The Valley Girl implications of the phrase “as if” are not lost on me here. That *Clueless*’ Cher speaks a post-revolutionary lingo is hopefully a topic to which I will one day return (Heckerling, 1995). See also Hegel’s critique of Kant’s metaphysics and aesthetics as a mere system of “oughts” or “as ifs” in his *Aesthetics*: ultimately, Kant’s aesthetics (and epistemology) remains “a mere ought deferred to infinity” (“Historical Deduction of the True Idea of Art in Modern Philosophy,” LXXVII, 63).

<sup>10</sup> Oscar Wilde’s *The Soul of Man under Socialism* reaches a similar terminus, since for him the point of socialism is to liberate human beings from uglier pursuits: “Now as the State is not to govern, it may be asked what the State is to do. The State is to be a voluntary association that will organize labour, and be the manufacturer and distributor of necessary commodities. The State is to make what is useful. The individual is to make what is beautiful... To sweep a slushy crossing for eight hours on a day when the east wind is blowing is a disgusting occupation. To sweep it with mental, moral, or physical dignity seems to me to be impossible. To sweep it with joy would be appalling. Man is made for something better than distributing dirt. All work of that kind should be done by a machine” (32). See *De Profundis and Other Writings* (London: Penguin Books, 1982).

minimalist in the evening” (*The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art*, 114). Warhol, too, faux-vapidly comments in his book *POPism* that, in an ideal world, “you ought to be able to be an Abstract Expressionist next week, or a Pop artist, or a realist, without feeling that you have given up something” (222). The Virtual Revolution has transpired, with Andy Warhol as its pluralizing hero. Since nothing is at stake, everything is possible. Subject positions multiply without end. Lacking gravity, the universe flies marvelously apart. Without the need to specialize, humanity is free to pursue its own interests, to dabble in this and that, to putter and tinker. Producing a professional dilettante, the revolutionized world regresses labor to play.

Where does Warhol stand with regard to the Enlightenment project itself? The most basic issue here is whether or not Romanticism, with its revolutionary imperative, constitutes a schism with Enlightenment thinking, or if it represents merely its fulfillment (postmodernism completes modernism by negating it). If, as 1.4 has argued, Warhol is a paragon of Romanticism and, as this current chapter argues, his Romanticism terminates not in revolutionary activity but in unapologetic creature consumption, there remains the problem of his own relation to Enlightenment thinking. Returning to my analogy Duchamp/Kant = Warhol/Hegel in 1.1, I pose these conundra only to expose what in Hegel Warhol speaks to, thereby elucidating connections/rifts between modernism and postmodernism, or, roughly, revolutionary and complicit thinking. Since postmodernism does define itself against modernism, the nature of that “againstness” demands qualification—whether it be best described as a rupture, a coda, an event planned for and anticipated by modernism itself, or as some other vital relation. The Romantics clearly envision

their project as effecting a split with Enlightenment thinking (for example, with Augustan poetics, or Regency politics); for this reason, a book such as Jerome McGann's *The Romantic Ideology* has caused a commotion (unearthing Romanticism's ideological core, McGann re-Enlightens Romantic works, thus de-Romanticizing them; "Romanticism" and "Enlightenment" are evidently inversely proportional quantities). Warhol's renunciation of revolutionary aesthetic (and social-political) tradition undermines that modern organ of change, the avant-garde. That Warhol retains some semblance of avant-gardeness through his rejection of revolution may seem oxymoronic or even counter-intuitive, yet investigating this condition makes way for a critique of Enlightenment aspirations and their transmissibility.

As perhaps the paradigmatic Warholian example of what revolution comes to mean within the culture of late capitalism, I look again to his soup cans, this time not for their relation to the sacramental, but for the way they emblazon the death of revolution on a thunderstruck present. Repeatable, serialized, even "Fauved" (*Colored Campbell's Soup Can*, 1965), Warhol's aluminum cylinders veer off the road to utopia. As a candidate for revolutionary object, the soup can at first seems to offer little more than comic relief. That an aluminum receptacle filled with tomato purée should ever come to transform the visual arts is laughable. Comparing Warhol's wimpiness with the alleged heroism of a Pollock reveals the presence of an important aesthetic (and sexual) change. While the one makes its presence known through connotations of ordinariness, inconsequentiality and feminine domestic order, the other asserts a violent masculine struggle for some sort of transcendental truth.

One speaks in a whisper while the other bellows. Comparing it with the nobility of a van Gogh reveals a fundamental dissonance, for while the one makes no attempt to spiritualize the products of everyday life, the other portrays the ordinary (a boot, a sunflower) as spiritually infused and existentially loaded. One remains lost in its objecthood while the other convulses. As these comparisons indicate, the diminutive soup can refuses the revolutionary narrative (this, despite the fact that it is “ordinary” in precisely the same way that, for Wordsworth, “ordinary” speech is ordinary—and, in light of Augustan verse, revolutionary). To refuse revolution in the early 1960s in urban America was to defy all expectation of what an avant-garde artist could hope to accomplish; to engage in society portraiture in the 1970s and 1980s was equally surprising. Such was the Pop revolution in its Warholian mode—for even when compared with the work of his Pop contemporaries, Warhol’s paintings offend the revolutionary sensibility, their refusal to remain stable as anti-capitalist objects producing the requisite offence. Is the soup can a celebration of everyday American existence? A critique of the hegemonic status quo? Proof that modern life, with its emphasis on standardization and normalization, has become bereft of all existential meaning? All questions may be answered in the affirmative, making the Campbell’s Soup Can as immortalized by Warhol difficult to assimilate either to the narrative of art’s progress (Hegelian aesthetic revolution) or the narrative of the artist’s struggle with the quasi-religious burden of artmaking (Pollock’s and van Gogh’s burden).<sup>11</sup> “I

---

<sup>11</sup> For a closer look at van Gogh’s burden, consult Antonin Artaud’s *Van Gogh, the Man Suicided by Society* (1947) in *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings* (Berkeley: University of California, 1988). This essay recounts perhaps the most notorious example of the psychological toll taken by aesthetic modernism: “One day the executioners came for Van Gogh, just as they came for Gérard de Nerval, Baudelaire, Poe, and Lautréamont. Those who one day said to him: That’s enough now, van Gogh, to the grave, we’ve had enough of your genius; as for the infinite, the infinite is for us. For it was not because he sought the infinite that van Gogh died. That he found himself forced to suffocate from

finally got a BMW painted, black with pink roll-on flowers. Maybe they'll read meaning into it. I hope so" (*Diaries*, Tuesday, April 18, 1978); like Warhol's later BMW, the soup asks to be read at the same time that it exudes indifference to the act of reading. In short, the soup can sells; it has mass-appeal, and will please everyone from the most die-hard Communist ideologue to the most clueless Valley girl shopaholic.<sup>12</sup> Voilà: the blood of the guillotine is replaced by the lycopene-saturated tomato pulp of the soup factory. Hannah Arendt's prognosis of the American Revolution has come to pass: it has, much to the horror of the Frankfurt School, ended in the simple, unmediated pleasure of savoring a steaming bowl of smashed tomatoes brought to you by the bounty of Omaha, Nebraska.

Reflecting life after the virtual revolution has come to pass, Warhol's soup cans, among other images, testify to the fact that the most avant-garde act is to renounce the avant-garde altogether: it, too, must be transcended. What survives the revolution is an art of total surface, an aesthetics of ingestion. Mortifying the revolutionary tradition, a body of ideas, beliefs and hopes which has accompanied the Enlightenment as a dangerous spectre from Robespierre to Lenin, Warhol's soup cans constitute the very paradigm shift bringing art to an end. However, detaching art from pretensions to historical magnificence, they instead serve to free art from ideological stagnation. Liberated from the revolutionary imperative, art continues

---

poverty and asphyxiation, it was because he found himself denied the infinite by all that rabble which, even in his lifetime, thought to withhold the infinite from him and van Gogh could have found enough of the infinite to last his whole life if the brutish consciousness of the masses had not wanted to appropriate it to nourish their own orgies, which have never had anything to do with painting or poetry" (510-511).

<sup>12</sup> Styles of collecting Warhols are important in that they point to a pathological parataxis. Bob Colacello's *Holy Terror: Andy Warhol Close Up* recounts such stories: "One day in 1974, Halston came to lunch and bought ten miniature Mao paintings, for about \$2000 each" (260). Ultimately, Warhols are made for the shopaholic. They are meant to be consumed *en masse*, not singularly.

through a proliferation of superficial Pop objects whose only revolutionary act is to renounce the inherited mania for turning the world upside-down. Complicit, art loses its modern purity and wallows in the mud of the ordinary. Even if one is poor, there are always the joys of Coca Cola and hotdogs—pleasures to which the Queen of England and Elizabeth Taylor have access to, as well as dirt farmers and domestic help:

In Europe the royalty and the aristocracy used to eat a lot better than the peasants—they weren't eating the same things at all. It was either partridge or porridge, and each class stuck to its own food. But when Queen Elizabeth came here and President Eisenhower bought her a hot dog I'm sure he felt confident that she couldn't have had delivered to Buckingham Palace a better hot dog than that one he bought her for maybe twenty cents at the ballpark. Because there *is* no better hot dog than a ballpark hot dog. Not for a dollar, not for ten dollars, not for a hundred thousand dollars could she get a better hot dog. She could get one for twenty cents and so could anybody else (*Philosophy*, 101).

In Warhol's world, pleasure is for everyone, not merely the well-to-do. La Dolce Vita can belong to Donna Summer, but it can also belong to an impoverished go-go boy dancing his heart out to "Hot Stuff." Buying the hype, Warhol envisions a global utopia promising cheap thrills. Consuming these products results in an odd variety of solidarity: after all, money really might be everything.

## Concentrated Spectacles

Perhaps Warhol's liquidation of the revolutionary impulse is best demonstrated by his own engagement of Communist iconography, a theme interesting him throughout his career (given that Russia's 1917 Bolshevik Revolution is itself iconic, Warhol once again hits a nerve). Not merely pastiche, works like his 1973 Mao series pose the problem of turning socialist master ideologues into discardable Pop trash. Like cows, Mao too becomes decorator wallpaper, his big purple head reconstituting into a field of whimsical polka dots. Koestenbaum, too, recognizes the Mao series as circus-like: "In this series, he turned the revered Chairman into a fleshy, maternal Monroe, the face an epitome of sated appetite, plump and colorful as a carnival balloon" (169). With Warhol, we shop not only for diamonds, stars and Art Deco furniture, but also for avatars of anti-capitalist revolution, whose celebrity becomes a commodity in its own right. Mao and Diana Ross are carried in the same Big Brown Bag, bumping against one another with horror and glee. Miscontextualized and misrepresented, Chairman Mao, leader of the greatest Communist cultural revolution, lives on as parti-colored clown. *White on White* morphs into Mao on Mao, as Mao paintings are placed on Mao wallpaper: the more Mao, the better. Since mass production necessarily entails the axiom that all is reproducible and serializable, there is no reason on earth why a Cold War monster should not receive the Factory treatment. He has taken on a screenic life. Mao's image counts. Flitting about the capitalist imagination as a destroyer, a cultural leveler and an imminent threat to domestic security, Mao achieves the celebrity status

of the delinquent. He too is a criminal—and criminals are always sexy in Warhol's world, whether they be fictional (Victor in *Vinyl*) or actual (Mao). Like the mugshots in *Thirteen Most Wanted Men* (1964), Mao is one of America's enemies. Seducing with his offences, he captivates while horrifying. He is a star. Like Elizabeth Taylor, he is instantly recognizable: his image has already been mass-produced by both the Communist propaganda engine and the capitalist newsmedia machine, so why not reflect that mass production on canvas? His mass appeal is a reservoir waiting to be pumped dry. Perversely open, capitalism performs the difficult feat of macrophaging its opposition: this cast of characters exists within, and not outside, capitalism, and demands representation. Yet only Warhol comes forward to give that representation Pop flair.

Similarly, objects like the Communist hammer and sickle sit by the side of used soup cans, ruminating farm creatures and disposed Dr. Scholl's corn pads, allowing an ideology to thicken diachronically. Openly defying Communist doctrine, the hammer and sickle flash their labels to the world. Fabricated in a particular place at a particular time, the proper name onomastically attached to them will not shut up: "Champion No. 15/by true Temper." Connecting the generic farm implements of the proletariat or *kulak* with a product name decimates a pro-Communist reading, since the specificity of the sickle implies a capitalist order. That the product name is written upside-down on the sickle both forces a mental rotation of the canvas while whispering the metaphor that perhaps Communism itself is upside-down, *fakakta*. Furthermore, the absence of a proper noun on the hammer destabilizes a pro-Capitalist reading; that we will never know the origin of the

hammer cuts against the logic of the supercommodity whose name we cannot forget (Campbell's, Coca-Cola, Dr. Scholl). Ultimately, the painting utters the scandalous proposition that, despite American fears of a Red invasion and national anxieties leading to the deaths of people like Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the most basic anti-capitalist symbol has lost its *pouvoir*: "Warhol was inspired to paint hammers and sickles during a trip to Italy, where he noticed that the symbol of the Soviet Union was among the most typical graffiti on walls. The drawings were so commonplace that they seemed to him almost Pop, having lost their intended meaning through repetition and functioning as decoration instead of political statement" (Bourdon, 354).<sup>13</sup> Consequently, critical responses to the piece wavered between outrage and exuberance: "Some critics, diving deeply for meaning, interpreted the apparent disarray of Warhol's hammers and sickles as an ironic comment upon the Soviet economy. Others thought he was attempting to trivialize a potent symbol by turning it into an element of decoration" (Bourdon, 357). Truly, Communist symbology is decorative, just as in the Death and Disaster series' toxic tuna (*Tunafish Disaster*, 1963) or defenestrations (*Suicide*, 1963) are rendered chic (hence the title of Warhol's 1971 collaboration with Gerard Malanga, *Chic Death*).<sup>14</sup> For Warhol, little escapes decoration; theoretically, anything, no matter how horrible, can adorn a wall.

Amoebalike, capitalism turns all into ornament through repetition and multiplication.

Reversing the Communist propensity to repress oppositional images and reports—

---

<sup>13</sup> Warhol's love of graffiti in the instance of the hammer and sickle paintings recalls his love of the graffiti artist: specifically, Jean-Michel Basquiat. Like his love of gossip, his affection for the scribbled recalls a more basic gravitation toward the illicit (gossip as illegitimate knowledge-claim, graffiti as illegal painting).

<sup>14</sup> In *Chic Death* (Cambridge: Pym Randall Press, 1971), Warhol provides the images, and Malanga, the poems. Carrying the Death and Disaster series into the print arena, *Chic Death* showcases Warhol's paintings as sources of inspiration for Malanga, while giving Warhol's images a "storyline."

Arendt's best example is Stalin's public statement that the Paris Métro does not exist—the capitalist machine repeats the enemy's name to the point of banalization.<sup>15</sup> Overrepresentation, too, is a strategy of de-semantification. Representing drainage, Warhol makes a denigrated form into an elegant backdrop.

In his *Society of the Spectacle*, Guy Debord differentiates between two types of spectacle, the diffuse and the concentrated. For Debord, the diffuse spectacle exists under capitalism; the concentrated, under socialism. Proliferating endlessly, the diffuse spectacle pinches off into ever new manifestations as neonatal stars emerge and products achieve maximum exposure within the media. Living in the absence of proliferation, the concentrated spectacle allows only a minimum of icons to pass through the media machine. Restricting what may replicate, the logic of the concentrated spectacle condenses all meaning into a limited set of icons. This set reproduces without end, saturating all aspects of the lifeworld. Hence while capitalist America circulates Blancas, Graces, Lizas and Halstons, Communist China circulates only Mao, and Communist Russia circulates Stalin and Lenin to the exclusion of all other personae. While the total amount of cathectic energy invested in the capitalist series and the Communist singularities might indeed remain the same, what differs is the quotient implied by the act of division. Hence Mao is more powerful than Liza by virtue of his monopoly on representation:

---

<sup>15</sup> "Common sense trained in utilitarian thinking is helpless against this ideological supersense, since totalitarian regimes establish a functioning world of no-sense... What makes a truly totalitarian device out of the Bolshevik claim that the present Russian system is superior to all others is the fact that the totalitarian ruler draws from this claim the logically impeccable conclusion that without this system people never could have built such a wonderful thing as, let us say, a subway; from this, he again draws his logical conclusion that anyone who knows of the existence of the Paris subway is a suspect because he may cause people to doubt that one can do things only in the Bolshevik way. This leads to the final conclusion that in order to remain a loyal Bolshevik, you have to destroy the Paris subway. Nothing matters but consistency" (*The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 458).

The dictatorship of the bureaucratic economy cannot leave the exploited masses any significant margin of choice because it has had to make *all* the choices itself, and because any choice made independently of it, even the most trivial—concerning food, say, or music—amounts to a declaration of war to the death on the bureaucracy. This dictatorship must therefore be attended by permanent violence. Its spectacle imposes an image of the good which is a résumé of everything that exists officially, and this is usually concentrated in a single individual, the guarantor of the system's totalitarian cohesiveness. Everyone must identify magically with this absolute celebrity—or disappear. For this figure is the master of not-being-consumed, and the heroic image appropriate to the *absolute exploitation* constituted by primitive articulation accelerated by terror. If every Chinese has to study Mao, and in effect *be* Mao, this is because there is *nothing else to be* (Thesis #64).

The celebrity of Mao resides in his total domination of representation. No other role model exists for potential consumers, and there is no other commodity to ingest. Mao's image destroys all others. Voracious, his appetite for ideological control assures that no visual rivals will surface.

Even within capitalism, individual commodities and spectacles aspire to the sort of glamour apposite to Mao: "Each individual commodity fights for itself, cannot acknowledge the others, and aspires to impose its presence everywhere as though it were alone. The spectacle is the epic poem of this strife—a strife that no fall of Ilium can bring to an end" (Debord, Thesis #66). Wishing to wipe out all competing commodities, the capitalist object fantasizes manically about a Mao-like dictatorship of representation. Similarly, Arendt views the capitalist commodity as striving for autocracy:

And it is true that the advertising columns of every newspaper show this “scientificity,” by which a manufacturer proves with facts and figures and the help of a “research” department that his is the “best soap in the world.” It is also true that there is a certain element of violence in the imaginative exaggerations of publicity men, that behind the assertion that girls who do not use this particular brand of soap may go through life with pimples and without a husband, lies the wild dream of monopoly, the dream that one day the manufacturer of the “only soap that prevents pimples” may have the power to deprive of husbands all girls who do not use his soap (*The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 345).

Applying Arendt to the series of stars, art dealers, athletes and socialites contained within the Celebrity Portrait cluster makes for interesting speculations, since the possibility arises that within each 40” x 40” square, a battle for domination unfolds. Competitions among Warhol Superstars take on a new meaning; squabbles between, for example, Mary Woronov and “harpy without a hole” Vera Cruise, or Viva and Ultra Violet, are revealed as shockingly world-historical.<sup>16</sup> Encountering an expanse of nearly identical Campbell’s soup cans, we marvel at how successful the Campbell’s corporation has been at liquidating the competition: Lipton’s is nothing, Campbell’s, everything. Brillo, too, stakes its claim, knocking S.O.S. pads off the proscenium. Testament to the megalomaniacal tendencies of the commodity, Warhol’s celebrity persons and products dramatize the battle for market domination. Within this schema, old favorites are replaced by exciting newcomers, as when, on July 3, 1977, the *Diaries* proclaim Victor Hugo the new Ondine: “Victor is my new

---

<sup>16</sup> In *Swimming Underground*, Woronov recalls her incredible disdain for the vagina-less Vera Cruise, who stalks her to the point of madness. Pushing her on the Union Square subway tracks, Woronov is unable to off this supernatural creature, who reappears under Warhol’s arm in Max’s back room carrying a vial of Woronov’s urine. See “The True Cross” (169-181).

Ondine, he even uses a TWA flight bag like Ondine used to.”<sup>17</sup> Or: “Went over to visit Victor at his new loft, which just has a bed in the middle with big jars of different kinds of Vaseline around it—he’s so much like Ondine” (Thursday, June 16, 1977). Erased yet preserved by Victor Hugo, the old Ondine loses the battle for muse to himself: “Oh and Paul said he saw Ondine and that he’s still traveling around the country with a 16mm print of *Chelsea Girls*, showing it and giving lectures. What is Ondine going to do when that print just disintegrates? Or if it gets lost? Now *that’s* a play” (Tuesday, March 16, 1982). The old Ondine is suddenly an artifact of a past order. He cannot survive the present: “Oh, and more sixties updates: My sixty-year-old cousin called and she was in town with her son and they said they wanted to come and see the office, so they came down. And her son is the one who knew Ondine in Pittsburgh. He once took the film courses that Ondine was (*laughs*) giving there, and he told me that Ondine is now selling hot dogs at Madison Square Garden” (Saturday, November 30, 1985). As Ondine’s fall from grace demonstrates, a temporality beckons: the commodity must battle not only other commodities, but time itself, whose irresistible progression places all commodities in jeopardy. “Indeed, Warhol couldn’t stand old *anything*—a paradox for a collector, who usually thrives on the departed. His collecting urge was actually a renovation or rejuvenation project in disguise, for he sought *new* categories, but of old stuff. Kidnapped by sameness, Andy chased difference wherever he could find it—usually in the embrace of a fresh category, yesterday’s stale modalities kicked aside” (Koestenbaum, 161). Ondine’s

---

<sup>17</sup> The entry continues: “But it’s getting kind of too heavy, seeing him so much. He should get his art career going, but he thinks he doesn’t have to have sex with somebody to get ahead. I told him, ‘You’ve got to fuck your way to the top.’ Then I told him the Barbara Rose/Frank Stella story.” Eventually, Haltson will become Hugo’s vehicle.

greatest enemy is Ondine. Dramatizing the perils of fame, Warhol's art puts forth a *carpe florem* aesthetic: our fifteen minutes may be extended, but only if we are successful at laying waste to our past.

For Debord, what unites the diffuse and concentrated spectacles is the fact that, ultimately, each relies upon a false unity. Within the force field of the diffuse spectacle, all commodities, however differentiated they may be, come together under the commodity form itself (here rephrased as spectacle): "The false choice offered by spectacular abundance, based on the juxtaposition, on the one hand, of competing yet mutually reinforcing spectacles and, on the other hand, of roles—for the most part signified by and embodied in objects—that are at once exclusive and interconnected, evolves into a contest among phantom qualities meant to elicit devotion to qualitative triviality" (Thesis #62). Behind the glittering façade of fashion-forward celebrities and revolutionizing products, all of which seem to constitute an array of infinite extension, lies the sad reality of commodity unity: whatever we choose, the result will be the same. A product is a product, and matter is only matter. The concentrated spectacle deploys unity and diversity differently, since its scheme is to market the totalitarian star as a false point of unity (in Žižek's language, Mao "quilts" the ideological field through a fictitious and mythical act of semantic confluence).<sup>18</sup>

Thus while the diffuse spectacle, such as the range of stars presented by the Celebrity Portraits, founds an apparent diversity on a concealed unity, the concentrated

---

<sup>18</sup> Žižek's presents his theory of the ideological quilt in the "Che Vuoi?" chapter of his *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989, 87-129). Basically, Žižek's point is that master signifiers "quilt" an ideological field together by functioning as a false and empty point of unity. Hence a concept like "democracy" carries zero meaning, yet wields immense power; following Warhol's advice, it goes horizontal. For a further discussion of Žižek's work, see also "Arguing with the Real" in Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter* (187-222).

spectacle abjures diversity by instituting the virtual unity of the dictator, such as Mao. Within this schema, Mao comes to represent an ideal point. Accomplishing what commodities like scouring pads, corn remedies and disco starlets can only dream of accomplishing, Mao presents the actuality of concentrated power for an American audience lost in the disorienting surge of commodity froth. Though reduced to mere decoration, Mao still speaks to the allure of total domination. Lusting for absolute power, the plethora of commodities distributed within American pop culture envy Mao for his ability to monopolize desire. Ironically, Mao is finally made to compete. Warhol's mischievousness removes Mao from the niche he rules absolutely and places him in a battledome with kitsch, trash, dreck. Koestenbaum identifies Warhol's knack for leveling fame as "Commonism": "Mao's face was a flash card of the world's greatest star, but his cult signaled individualism's collapse; like the 'Female Movie Star Composite' collage that Andy made in 1962—four ink-drawn slivers of the faces of Joan Crawford, Greta Garbo, Sophia Loren, and Marlene Dietrich, taped together, as if by Dr. Moreau, into one unrecognizable cyborg—Andy's Mao was a contemporary Jesus whose face, if you worshiped it, forgave (and decimated) individual idiosyncrasy" (170). The unconsumable has finally been consumed, as the one disappears into the many.

Yet apart from these political and economic concerns, Warhol's utter disinterest in content sends out shock waves. In the end, Mao is pure form; like the swastika, his repeatability siphons off most, but not all, meaning: "Went to some punk stores with Victor and Catherine, one was called Seditonaries. We got shirts that were made out of Nazi symbols and that you could tie yourself together with, and

a T-shirt of two cocks pissing on Marilyn Monroe's photograph, saying the word 'Piss.'" (Monday, July 23, 1979—London). Consequently, lunch dates with Nazi filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl are not out of the ordinary, as Colacello reports in *Holy Terror: Andy Warhol Close Up*:

One of our first get-togethers in the new place was a secret lunch in October 1974 for Leni Riefenstahl, Hitler's favorite filmmaker, organized by Bianca Jagger and Peter Beard... Bianca had met her when the London *Sunday Times* magazine asked the Jagers to pose for a cover, and Mick flippantly told them he'd only pose for Leni Riefenstahl, thinking they'd never go for it. They did, and Bianca and Leni became fast friends. "She was one of the great beauties of the day, another prejudice to overcome," Bianca wrote in *Interview* when Harper & Row published Riefenstahl's *Last of the Nuba*, her book of East Africa photographs. "She had to prove, always, that a beautiful woman can do anything, that a beautiful woman is not necessarily dull and spoiled, that a beautiful woman can be intelligent and original" (259).

Cooing over Riefenstahl's African photographs, Warhol sees them in terms of curvature, extension, and morphology: "'She's great,' he said after she left. 'She doesn't care about politics. She just cares about beauties.' He could have been talking about himself" (259). Treating content as a semantic zero, Warhol enrages those individuals for whom content still packs a punch: "The Princess Holstein in *Interview* was upset because I was doing a poster for Joseph Beuys's Green Party, she said it was a tragedy that somebody like me would do it, that it was a Socialist party, and I didn't know what to do. She told Bob she didn't know if she could continue working for a person who would make a political statement without even knowing what it meant" (*Diaries*, Wednesday, September 3, 1980). Mao and the hammer and

sickle might indeed become mere form for Warhol, his images of them reflecting the loss of meaning they have undergone in the wake of media-fueled repetition.

Speeding up the process of meaning-loss, Warhol turns the funeral of content into a festival to which we are all invited.

### Royalty

As Warhol's success gains him entrée to an international world of prestige and privilege, the phonetic and onomastic texture of proper names shifts, as does the social fabric of which such bodies is composed. Street names like the Sugar Plum Fairy and Rotten Rita, protagonists of *a, a novel*, give way to salon names like Happy Rockefeller, Honey Berlin, and Lady Bird Johnson, while metaphorical markers like the Duchess or the Mayor find themselves obviated in favor of literal designations (real Duchesses, real mayors). These new names clump together magnetically, presenting a new social configuration in which older orders find themselves sublated (Brigid Berlin's glamour passes to her mother, Honey). Bob Calocello reports one such collage in *Holy Terror*, as Warhol and his entourage attend a Marcos soiree at the Carlyle Hotel:

Still being videotaped, we moved into the center of the sitting room and admired the view of Manhattan, Queens, *and* New Jersey, while noting the names on the cards attached to the flower arrangements set up on pedestals: Jerry and Betty Ford, Nelson and Happy Rockefeller, Henry and Nancy Kissinger, Hugh Carey, Abe and Mary Beame, David and Peggy Rockefeller, Dick and Honey Berlin... "Gee, Brigid's parents are

really up there,” said Andy. And after a beat, “Can you see my pimples in this bright light?” (272)

Finally, Warhol is able to speak Edie Sedgwick’s language, to articulate the names of the rich as an insider (think, for example, of Edie’s attachment to a name like “Fou Fou”).<sup>19</sup> Underground cinema stars—Taylor Mead, Joe Dallesandro, Ondine—are succeeded by aboveground movie icons—Ali McGraw, Liza Minnelli, Sylvester Stallone. Similarly, the rock-n-roll star represented by Lou Reed or Nico pales in comparison with the disco star represented by Grace Jones or Debbie Harry. Though the alternate celeb does persist—Tinkerbelle, Divine, Victor Hugo, Crazy Matty—this creature no longer flies solo, having been reabsorbed into a more comprehensive social field. These fringe specimens spice up the bourgeois tales of the *Diaries*, mixing up social strata to produce collages in which unlikely souls find themselves juxtaposed: “Talked to Tinkerbelle and she was saying how she makes out with everybody she interviews, that she was making out with Christopher Walken and that his wife was getting upset. She said she cut her arm falling on the glass from a skylight—she’s broken into a friend’s apartment—she thought they had some drugs in there. I guess Tinkerbelle’s really wild” (Saturday, December 23, 1978). No longer eminent in their own right, proper nouns like “Tinkerbelle” achieve value only by virtue of their contrast with the names of world and cultural leaders.<sup>20</sup> A name

---

<sup>19</sup> “Where’s Fou Fou?” she asks at the famous 1965 Philadelphia ICA opening, searching for her debutante friends among fraternity boys, one of whom arrives dressed as a Mexican migrant worker (as reported in *Greater Philadelphia*, November 1965, 157). Fou Fou also appears in *Camp*.

<sup>20</sup> Submerged within my discussion of “names” is the question of onomastogenesis, or how street names are created from birth names (for example, the production of Holly Woodlawn from Harold Azjenberg, Candy Darling from James Slattery Jr., or even Andy Warhol from Andrew Warhola). For psychoanalytic accounts of name-formation, see Žižek’s discussion of the names “Lucky Luciano” and “Joseph Stalin” in *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (107-108).

like Tinkerbelle points to wildness; it tempers a name like Honey Berlin, whose whimsicality betrays an artisocratic excess.

What pulls Warhol away from revolution and toward counter-revolution is primarily his love of hierarchy. As I have stated in earlier chapters, Warhol's deepest fascination is for the status quo: how things are, where people have ended up, how the world finds itself organized. The fact of existence intrigues Warhol, and so he seeks not to change that order, but to enter and represent it (not, of course, without a healthy dose of irony). Reigning queens and kings of every walk of life thus intrigue him, whether they rule a country (Imelda Marcos, the Shah of Iran), dominate a fashion scene (Diana Vreeland, Diane Von Furstenberg), or preside over a party scene (the DuPont twins, Dianne Brill). With commercial success, Warhol draws closer to the wealthy, whose commissions drive his business, and whose illumination lights the way for new aesthetic scandals directed primarily against a liberal avant-garde programmed to loathe the bourgeoisie. While he begins his career immersed in the vortex of freaks and crazies epitomized by the early Factory, he ends it in the company of the eminent, the propertied, the monied, many of whom come off as no less insane the Factory crowd—as when, for example, Imelda Marcos entertains guests at her East 66<sup>th</sup> Steeet townhouse with her vocal stylings: “Imelda’s gotten a little too fat, though, so if I did her picture I’d want to do it from the old days, when she was Miss Philippines in the pageant. She was being a hostess and she sang, later on after dinner she sang about twelve songs—‘Feelings,’ and then that song from the war, you know, the oozy-doozy-bowsy-lowsy one. Oh, what is it? ‘Mares Eat Oats.’ Everybody said that once Imelda gets started partying you can’t stop her, that she’s

always the last to leave, and it was true, she was going strong” (*Diaries*, Wednesday, October 3, 1984).

Compared with the behavior of a Warhol regular like Andrea Whips Feldman, Imelda becomes a character out of Max’s Kansas City’s back room:

Her [Andrea’s] big thing at Max’s was to do “showtime”, which basically involved getting up on a table and getting her tits out and acting like a lunatic. People would start off by yelling, “Andrea! Andrea Superstar! It’s Showtime!” and she’d sit there sucking her thumb and saying in her little girl’s voice, “Noooo...I don’t wanna do showtime...” but they’d go “Come on, Andrea, you’re a big star, you’re bigger than any of them, you’re at the top.” And she’d start to say, “Yeah...I am at the top...I am a Superstar...” and her friends would be going. “Show us you’re a star, Andrea!” So she’d jump up on the table and get her tits out and start yelling, “It’s SHOW-TIME! It’s SHOW-TIME! It don’t rain on my parade! Everything’s coming up roses, baby!”<sup>21</sup>

Extreme narcissists, Imelda Marcos and Andrea Feldman draw on personal reservoirs of generosity and exhibitionism to entertain their fans: they give the gift of themselves infinitely, oblivious to questions of talent or reception (on this count, they share a mentality with the hopefuls of a TV show like the WB’s 2004 program

---

<sup>21</sup> Jayne County relays this and other stories about Andrea Feldman’s Showtime performances in her *Man Enough to be a Woman* (London: Serpent’s Tail, 1995, 72-73). Holly Woodlawn also recounts Andrea’s antics in her *A Low Life in High Heels* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1991); see especially the chapter “Madcap Mania at Max’s Kansas City,” 157-170. Feldman starred in the film *Trash* along with Holly, and battled Holly for top billing: “Hey, shut the fuck up! Don’t you know who I am? I’m Mrs. Andy Warhol. Now shut up!...This is Holly Woodlawn and she’s in my new movie. Holly, I’m gonna make you a star, baby. I’m gonna make you a Superstar because I’m Andrea Whips Warhol!” (Woodlawn, 137). Feldman eventually became one of the famed Warhol suicides, jumping out a window in February 1972 with a Bible and “Happy Birthday Andy” note (Bourdon, 321-322) or rosary and can of Coca-Cola (Bockris, 269), depending upon which source is consulted. Like Freddy Herko and (later) Tinkerbelle, she defenestrates her way to fame.

*Superstar USA*).<sup>22</sup> Read against Warhol's Superstars, Imelda thus comes off as a reject who has gone for the big time and made it—hence Warhol's put-down of Imelda as a "phony" (Colacello, 274). As a consequence, the rarefied stratosphere of the jet setters becomes an involuted 60s Underground in which freaks achieve worldly success and assume positions of power: ultimately, stars are stars, each suffering from delusions of grandeur and omnipotence. When Imelda becomes the subject of a Filipino documentary and Warhol is invited to a private screening, the end result is indistinguishable from Warhol's earliest movies: "We all sat in the front row in the otherwise empty room and waited for the Chinese servants to figure out how to run the portable movie projector. 'Is this glamorous, Bob?' whispered Andy. 'I mean, here we are with the First Lady and the First Son and the First Daughter and the Mr. and Mrs. Ambassador and just us, nobody else. So it must be glamorous, right? But then they can't get the projector to work, and it's just like the screenings at the old Factory, right?'" (Colacello, 276). Yet beyond questions of technical inexpertise, even Imelda's film jives with the Warhol aesthetic of filming life as life: "The Filipino documentary turned out to be Imelda's home movies, with a voice-over narration by the same fellow who narrates golf tournaments on television, in a hushed and reverent whisper, describing in words the very same image that was on the screen, in case anyone was blind" (Colacello, 276). Taken as such, Imelda's documentary becomes a version of 1964's *Tarzan and Jane Regained...Sort of*, with Taylor Mead's voiceover finding an analogue in Imelda's deferential narrator. Like

---

<sup>22</sup> The premise of *Superstar USA* is that talentless losers are given a chance to compete for the slot of hot new Pop star. Encouraged to perform by celebrity panelists, they act out their fantasies of stardom without any idea that only the worst performer will win the competition. Figures like Imelda Marcos and Andrea Feldman prefigure this mentality with their faith in their stardom and disregard for objective criteria of aesthetic success and failure.

Warhol, she too mortifies the cinema. Even better: like so many of Warhol's famous junkies, she too never sleeps: "'You know,' said Imelda, 'I only need two hours of sleep a day. This is God's gift to me'" (Colacello, 274).

Along with Warhol, Imelda is a master of parataxis, acquiring Francis Bacon paintings and Bulgari diamonds one after the other in a presumably infinite series of material gain: "The year before, she had electrified the art world by asking for prices at the Francis Bacon retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum. When told that the Met paintings were not for sale but that there was a Bacon show on at the Marlborough Gallery, Imelda had immediately motorcaded down to 57<sup>th</sup> Street, and, the buzz was, snapped up twenty large canvases at \$200,000 each. She was really bringing home the Bacon—and also, that same trip, according to a Bulgari associate, a million-dollar diamond" (Colacello, 270-271). Even after her being deposed, the shadows of that parataxis persist, as the popular press keeps vigilant track of the quantities she has managed to amass, and Warhol makes note: "In the *Times* it said that Imelda Marcos left 3,000 pairs of shoes in the Philippines. Maybe she *was* trash, I mean when I think about the type of people they were wining and dining. And they found porno in Marcos's room. It's like somebody went through your apartment and wrote about it (*laughs*) in *The New York Times*. 'This Is Your Apartment.' That's a good TV show.'" (*Diaries*, Sunday, March 9, 1986). Beyond mere footwear, Imelda's underwear is also the subject of public (and Warholian) scrutiny: "And the Marcoses are still in the news. Now they've found 3,000 black panties. And it's funny to hear a congressman say, 'Why did she need so many panties?'" (*Diaries*, Sunday, March 16, 1986). Warhol is even confused for Imelda and Ferdinand by Con

Ed, which continues to send Warhol the Marcoses' bills: "And that's when I remembered that I'd actually been getting the Marcoses' Con Ed bills at my house, with a notice saying they were going to turn off the electricity if they didn't pay the bill. It's something about the way the address was written, it would always come to me at 57 East 66<sup>th</sup> and I opened them" (*Diaries*, Friday, December 11, 1981).

Imelda's neighbor and acquisitional double, Warhol replaces older doppelgängers like Edie Sedgwick with fresher and even more troublesome ones.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, as a concentrated spectacle in herself, Imelda (as well as the Shah and Empress of Iran) represents for Warhol the possibility of an infinitely multiplying commission. Economically, the magic of the concentrated spectacle is precisely that its monopoly on representation makes it the only game in town; unlike the diffuse spectacle, the concentrated spectacle ensures its own multiplication. As Colacello reports, Warhol courts Imelda as client and patron with the hopes that securing her commission might give him total control of her image back in the Philippines, as well as the images of her fellow autocratic friends and associates:

And, unlike President Ford, or any other leader of a democratic nation, Imelda Marcos really could order up scores of her silk-screened likeness, for every cabinet member's office, governor's mansion, and ambassador's residence, fulfilling one of Andy's fondest fantasies: the single commission that miraculously multiplied ad infinitum. And then, wouldn't President Marcos want *his* portrait, too, to hang side by side with the First Lady's in every post office, train station, and national-bank branch in the land? And once the Marcoses set the trend for official portraits by Andy Warhol—so flattering,

---

<sup>23</sup> Being neighbors with Imelda comes as proof that Andy is up there: "The Cristina Ford lady was there, so grand, and Imelda was dancing with Van Cliburn. They were serving champagne like water. I heard that Imee Marcos is seeing Lupo Rattazzi again. Said goodnight to Mrs. Marcos. Then I walked home" (*Diaries*, Friday, December 11, 1981). That Warhol can walk home from a fête at the Marcoses', and that he can mention the detail without ado, marks him as royal in his own right.

so easily reproduced—wouldn't the Pahlavis and the Saudis, Hassan and Hussein, the King and Queen of Thailand, all follow? And how about Imelda's new best friend, Mrs. Mao Tse-tung? (271).

All roads lead back to Mao, as Warhol, perhaps delusional, imagines his bloated images of the Communist superstar achieving a life outside irony (would Mao ever paper the rooms of his palace with Warhol's *pagliaccio*-like rendition of him?). Like Imelda, the Shah and Empress of Iran also promise a lucrative bottom line: "Now is the time to pop the question about the Shah's portrait to Hoveyda. I mean, his face really lit up when the Empress said that, because it was his idea, so now he'll want to help us with the next one. Then there's the three kids, Bob. You could be on easy street, but you better hurry. You heard them yelling out there" (Colacello, 359).<sup>24</sup>

While Warhol never does secure Imelda's commission, which vaporizes along with her power, he does receive the green light to execute portraits of Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlevi, Empress Farah, and the Shah's twin sister, Princess Ashraf. Operating at the fringes of respectability, Warhol makes dangerous friends of the Pahlevis. The popular press finds Warhol's attachment to the Shah's dynasty troublesome, epitomized by the headline chosen when his photograph with the Empress graces the cover of the *Village Voice*: "The Beautiful Butchers" (Colacello, 363). Balanced against commissions from, for example, Jimmy Carter and Miz

---

<sup>24</sup> Interacting with royals like the Shah necessitates the involvement of ambassadors and other middling figures—hence the presence of Fereydoun Hoveyda, Iran's ambassador to the United States. An ex-film critic, Hoveyda embraces Warhol both as go-between and peer, bringing his Iranian coterie the ultimate Western commodity, Warhol. Yet Hoveyda's relationship with Warhol is marked by tenderness, as when he is one of 6 out of 400 invitees to attend Warhol's *Shadows* opening at the Dia on January 25, 1979: "Six out of 400: Truman Capote, the Eberstadts, Fereydoun Hoveyda, who just resigned as ambassador, and the Gilmans. So 394 of our best friends were no-shows." Although Hoveyda escapes the Ayatollah, his brother remains behind in Iran and is hanged by the new régime (see entries for Monday, April 9, 1979, Thursday, April 19, 1979, and Monday, May 7, 1979).

Lillian, images like the Shah's, Empress' and Princess' make it clear that Warhol's sole focal point is fame itself, no matter in whom such a quality inheres (drag queens, socialites, presidents, dictators). In the final wash, positioning himself close to régimes like the Marcoses' or the Pahlevi's becomes a supreme example of Warhol's continual desire to situate himself near danger. The imminent peril of a political debacle or insurgence entices Warhol, who never tires of living on the brink of disaster. The charm of Imelda and the Shah is their soon-to-be evanescence—a charm not without its financial liabilities, as when the collapse of Pahlevi rule results in the Shah's inability to pay for portraits of himself and his family (according to Colacello, Warhol loses \$95,000 out of a promised \$190,000). The promise of revolution looms throughout Diary entries, as when Warhol attends a luncheon in honor of Empress Farah: "Bob and I cabbled to the Pierre Hotel for lunch in honor of the empress of Iran. There were demonstrators out front and it was scary, they wore masks, but they were Iranians, you could tell, because their hands were dark... The queen was reading a prepared speech and it was going along okay, and then a woman in a green dress in the press section stood up and screamed, 'Lies, lies, you liar!' and they dragged her out" (Thursday, July 7, 1977). Dangers such as these strike even closer to home, as when Warhol's Iranian connection earns him a bomb threat on May 1978, and his plans to attend soirées at Fiorucci, MoMA, and Xenon cause nerves to soar (Colacello, 366). When finally asked by Empress Farah to do her portrait, Warhol betrays the precariousness of the situation: "'Really?' said Andy, eyes bright, voice brighter. 'Let's go there right away and do it.' Then he lowered his voice and muttered to me, 'Before something happens'" (Colacello, 285). Like

his shooting by Valerie Solanas on June 3, 1968, the threat (or actualization) of physical violence marks Warhol as famous. Only somebodies receive such attention; nobodies fade unnoticed into an extra-media oblivion. Keenly aware of death's glamour, Warhol never strays from its force field. Risky, the Marcoses and the Pahlevis reproduce the dangers of a Solanis, a Tinkerbelle, or a Sedgwick: they too might go up in smoke, dragging Warhol along with them. Their volatility pulses through Warhol's veins as he teeters on the abyss. Without this teetering, there is no Warhol. Embracing the counter-revolution, Warhol walks a path fraught with peril from all sides. In this light, even political conservatism becomes edgy.

## 2.2 Drugs

So when the doorbell rang the night before, it was Liza in a hat pulled down so nobody would recognize her, and she said to Halston, “Give me every drug you’ve got.” So he gave her a bottle of coke, a few sticks of marijuana, a Valium, four Quaaludes, and they were all wrapped in a tiny box, and then a little figure in a white hat came up on the stoop and kissed Halston, and it was Marty Scorsese, he’d been hiding around the corner, and then he and Liza went off to have their affair on all the drugs (*Diaries*, Tuesday, January 3, 1978).

### Privileged Intake

Of all the creatures who populate and punctuate Warhol’s worlds—drag queens, hustlers, movie stars, First Wives—the drug user and abuser retain a particular access to glamour. Existing along a continuum ranging from the occasional substance dilettante to the hard-core, raging junkie, the consumer of drugs preoccupies Warhol throughout the 60s, 70s and 80s. Their actions and habits fascinate him, his screens the sacred place where their rituals are projected and packaged. While individual substance abusers fade from the limelight, as in the disappearance of Ondine shortly after the commercial success of *The Chelsea Girls*, the loss of status suffered by Brigid Polk in the 70s and 80s, or the fatal overdose of exemplary drug fiend Edie Sedgwick, the actual glamour of drugs remains, never giving up its allure.<sup>1</sup> Drugs survive the druggie, who exists merely as a vector for the

---

<sup>1</sup> While Brigid Berlin continues to exert a crucial influence on Warhol’s work in the 70s and 80s—for example, *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, as detailed by Bob Colacello in the chapter “Paris (and Philosophy)” —her street cred fades as the amphetamine abuse of the early Factory finds itself eclipsed by the cocaine orgies of the disco-era beautiful people. Speed loses its world-historicity as newer drugs take the top spot, and thus Brigid’s entertainment value diminishes. Furthermore, Warhol is particularly nasty to her at various points throughout his *Diaries*, especially those passages in which he tracks her weight: “Brigid Polk...called and said she’s down to 197. Ever since she saw herself in *Bad*...weighing 300 pounds and went on a diet, she’s so boring to talk to—she never *does* anything, she just *lies* there in bed in her room at the George Washington Hotel and waits for the fat to roll off. I told her I’ll give her a job—that she could let some roll off around the Factory while she answers phones, but she won’t. It’s taken her thirty-nine years to lose weight and it’ll probably take her another

ingestion of the controlled substance. Ever a delinquent, the druggie cannot be controlled, macrophaging what has been legislated to be outside the bounds of proper consumption somewhere beyond the law's glare—in a rented room at the Chelsea Hotel, inside a taxi cab, or in a bathroom at Studio 54, among other clandestine locales.<sup>2</sup> Even Warhol's own art openings attract the drug crowd: "The bathroom was crowded, I guess people were coking up" (this after the Dia Center for the Arts' Shadows opening; *Diaries*, Thursday, January 25, 1979). Worlds collide, as the art and club spheres take on the qualities of one another (one attends a Warhol opening to coke up, then zooms over to Palladium in the hopes of being Polaroided by Warhol and becoming an art object). Functioning as a sign of the subterranean, drugs authenticate Warhol as cool, giving his art and persona a special infusion of chic. In *Crack Wars: Literature Addiction Mania*, Avital Ronell sums up the urgency of the drug question pointedly: "There is no culture without a drug culture, even if this is to be sublimated to pharmaceuticals" (96). Yet beyond the textual problem of what relation an intoxicated underground bears to a sober aboveground, drug intake poses an even more basic problem: "Drugs make us ask what it means to consume anything,

---

thirty-nine years to get work" (Sunday, November 28, 1976). As the *Diaries* close, Warhol even jokingly prepares to fire her: "Oh, and Brigid is at the English fat farm and she's going to be fired when she gets back. I'll give her a pink slip, I'll give her *dogs* pink slips—Fame and Fortune will be fired!" (Tuesday, February 17, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Regarding the law and its glare, Warhol's affiliation with various NYC low-lives alerted the FBI, which kept close tabs on the habits of the Warhol entourage. See Margie Kramer's *Andy Warhol Et Al: The FBI File on Andy Warhol* (New York: Unsub Press, 1988). De-bracketing the secret actions of, for example, the A-heads, Warhol placed their styles of consumption on display, thereby exposing himself and others to danger. See also Anthony Haden-Guest's *The Last Party: Studio 54, Disco, and the Culture of the Night* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1997) for Warhol's response to Steve Rubell's having surrendered information about the cocaine use of Studio 54 patrons to the U.S. government: "The reaction of Steve Rubell's host of friends to the melting away of his money, his drugs, his power, was interesting. It was true that some had actually been upset about the Cocaine Favors List. Diane von Furstenburg, for instance, and Andy Warhol (who usually in his diaries refers to Rubell as 'Stevie' before prison and 'Stephen' after)" (197-198). While Haden-Guest is not entirely accurate with regard to Warhol's shift in attitude toward Rubell, he is correct in his assertion that Rubell's "narking" posed problems for Warhol and his circle.

anything at all. This is a philosophical question, to the extent that philosophy has always diagnosed health, that is, being-itself or the state of non-alienation, by means of its medico-ontological scanners” (63). Cultural production itself qualifies as an act of inebriation, or *Rausch*. Narcovoyeur, Warhol grasps the symbiosis of drugs and art, providing illustrious instances of drugs’ magical unworkings (*désœuvrements*).<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the sum of Warhol’s reports, various altering chemicals achieve respective levels of notoriety and fashionability. Each receives its metaphorical fifteen minutes: chemicals, too, can be stars, as “The Tingle” indicates (“lemons” are the olfactory scent of choice for 1975, according to Brigid). Developments in the synthesis and intake of psychotropic chemicals cause a history to crystallize: the intravenous meth and heroin craze of the 60s gives way to the nasal cocaine mania of the 70s and 80s; new psychiatric drugs, like Quaaludes, or Valium, make their mark; methods of drug consumption change over time, marking the emergence of new lifestyles and the erasure of older ones.<sup>4</sup> Always tracking the adventures of the drug user, Warhol passes from the frenzied early nucleus of amphetamine addicts or A-heads in his *a, a novel* to the cooler, more secretive coke heads of the Studio 54 set in

---

<sup>3</sup> “If the literature of electronic culture can be located in the works of Philip K. Dick or William Gibson, in the imaginings of a cyberpunk projection, or a reserve of virtual reality, then it is probable that electronic culture shares a crucial project with drug culture. This project should be understood in Jean-Luc Nancy’s and Blanchot’s sense of *désœuvrement*—a project without an end or program, an unworking that nevertheless occurs, and whose contours we can begin to read” (Ronell, 68).

<sup>4</sup> For Warhol, “chemicals” also refer to neurotransmitters: “The symptom of love is when some of the chemicals inside you go bad. So there must be something in love because your chemicals do tell you something,” for example (*Philosophy*, 47), or, “I think I’m missing some chemicals and that’s why I have the tendency to be more of a—mama’s boy. A—sissy. No, a mama’s boy. A ‘butterboy.’ I think I’m missing some responsibility chemicals and some reproductive chemicals” (*Philosophy*, 111). Like drugs, chemicals are interesting in and of their tropic potency. “Chemicals” relate to “problems”: “But when I was eighteen a friend stuffed me into a Kroger’s shopping bag and took me to New York. I still wanted to be close with people. I kept living with roommates thinking we could become good friends and share problems, but I’d always find out they were just interested in another person sharing the rent” (*Philosophy*, 22). Both problems and chemicals necessitate exchange, and as such interest Warhol, whom the *quid pro quo* never ceases to entrance.

the *Diaries*, ending his infatuation with the heroin-inspired antics of painter Jean-Michel Basquiat, also relayed in the *Diaries*. As a historical document, *a* records the early optimism surrounding amphetamine use among the Mole People, professional amphetamine junkies with the roachlike tendency to congregate in nests. In *Factory Made: Warhol and the Sixties*, Steven Watson describes these subterranean creatures: “One such outcast family, the one most closely connected to the Factory, was referred to as the A-Men, or the Mole People. The first name not only paid homage to their drug of choice but also punned on the Catholic background that many of them shared. The second name, the Mole People, had several associations. ‘We called them Mole People because they only seemed to come out at night,’ said Danny Fields. ‘Their skins were light, and they were very intense.’ It was also a campy put-down—as if they were creatures from the B-horror movie *The Mole People*, released in 1956” (167-168).<sup>5</sup> Warhol’s *a* documents the habits, attitudes and locutions of this outsider enclave:

(O) Six or eleven. Do you want to  
take 'em right now? Oh, you  
mean your orange juice?  
Stick 'em in the grapefruit juice.  
(D) I've just four left.  
(O) Let me take those little orange  
ones.  
Don't you want just four or you  
want five? They're actually ten.  
Five'll be . . . the MINute we  
get to Rita's they can be replen-  
ished. She has, she has this little

---

<sup>5</sup> According to Watson (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003), the Mole People can be contrasted with two competing drug groups, the Street People (homeless users) and the Pod People (users with pads, or pods). Watson defines “nests” as follows: “Nests: the living quarters for people on amphetamines, often small and housing a few dozen people” (169).

tiny marble picture (6).<sup>6</sup>

Less euphoric, the *Diaries*, compiled eight years later, invoke a different intensity. In them, cocaine use is reported by Warhol, yet without the sense of delight and wonder present in *a* (perhaps the Controlled Substance Act of 1970 has taken its toll, or perhaps Warhol, no longer taking diet pills, is more of a drug outsider). Ironically, the *Diaries* begin with cocaine renunciation: “Victor Hugo picked me up and we went to the U.N. Plaza for Mrs. Kaiser’s dinner for Halston (cab \$3). But then we realized we’d forgotten Bianca so we had to go back to pick her up at the Pierre. Victor gave her some coke but she didn’t want it” (Monday, December 13, 1976). As such, Warhol’s documentation of drug cultures from the “poke” posse of the Chelsea Hotel in the 60s to the cocaine blizzards at Studio 54 in the 70s and 80s to Jean-Michel Basquiat’s rides aboard the white horse in the 80s constitutes a sociological enterprise committed both to tracking the history of chemicals (old and new substances assume places in a chronology) and to examining one chemical at different points in history (for example, the heroin use of Edie Sedgwick is juxtaposed with the heroin use of Jean Michel Basquiat). The end product of Warhol’s meticulous attention to the special class of ingestion represented by drug intake is a body of work in which art and filth interpenetrate one another with no hope of extrication (there simply is no way to remove the speed-freakiness from the voice of Brigid in “The Tingle,” or to imagine a cinematic shooting free of shooting up).

---

<sup>6</sup> Throughout this passage, I have preserved the typography of *a* in order to give an accurate picture of its look. The book’s basic pattern is double columns of text interspersed with more regular pages. Each page is flanked by an italicized blip; in the instance of the quote provided, the quote is *I go under like a wonderful third time*. It refers to the ecstasy of the Obetrol high: “That’s a hundred milligrams, like pure gaiety” (7), muses Ondine.

Underlying Warhol's preoccupation with drugs is his very genuine passion for documenting the process of ingestion itself; in fact, drugs themselves become no more than a privileged case of ingestion, that paradigm of consumption by which the consumer suffers the delusion of transport. For Ronell, drugs invoke the biological paradigm of esophageal processing: "Where does the experience of eating begin? What of the remains? Are drugs in some way linked to the management of remains? How has the body been drawn into the disposal systems of our technological age?" (63). "Paracomestible," drugs surround and substitute for eating (the skin becomes a port of entry, the nose becomes a mouth).<sup>7</sup> At times, the magical scene of intoxication takes place at the outer limit of attention, as when a worn-out Gerard Malanga sniffs amyl nitrate at the end of *Vinyl*, though more often than not it takes center stage, as in the amphetamine pokes of Brigid Polk and Ondine in *The Chelsea Girls*, or in descriptions of Liza Minnelli's and Halston's cocaine escapades in the *Diaries*. Wherever such moments occur, someone clearly takes off for another zone of consciousness, and Warhol is present to make note of the change effected. As such, drugs tie to questions of sublimity, art's prime mode of transport: like the sublime, drugs scramble consciousness, threatening it with annihilation in the form of ego loss. Creating a "supplementary interiority," drugs, themselves straddling the border between singular and plural, magnify individuality, permitting it to flower in a charmed elsewhere which is still "here." Those who peddle drugs become as famous as those who pop, snort or shoot them: star dealers service a star clientele. Drug

---

<sup>7</sup> "As that which can swallow and throw up—naturally or artificially—the body rigorously engages the dynamics of becoming, surpassing itself without reducing itself to a passageway. These observations in fact model age-old concerns whose subscription to thought has been renewed by the way drugs negotiate the paracomestible substance" (Ronell, 64).

dealers become film stars, as when the Sugar Plum Fairy takes a role in 1965's *My Hustler*, or when Brigid Berlin deals drugs on camera during her scene in *The Chelsea Girls* ("I'm peddling my wares on my bicycle..."). Whether we are in the Chelsea Hotel, Studio 54 or Jean-Michel Basquiat's studio, the spectre of privileged (and outlawed) consumption hovers above us, tempting us with the glamour of the *demimonde*, a vogue rooted in closeness to the abject. Couched in secrecy, proximity to scenes of drug intake authenticates Warhol as anthropologist and bad boy. Near drugs, yet somehow impervious to them, Warhol instantly becomes radically chic, a fate not allotted to other contemporary Pop artists. Illegal, drugs bestow glamour upon those brave enough to partake of them—and those savvy enough to share their habitats without succumbing to the pitfalls of substance abuse. Those aspiring celebrities courageous enough to flaunt their habits enrapture Warhol with their fragrance, and come down to posterity as a class of exemplary drifters. The Duchess, Edie Sedgwick, Rotten Rita, the Sugar Plum Fairy, Halston, Liza, Victor Hugo, Basquiat: as epistemological object, the druggie is priceless.

Encouraging others to consume what he does not, Warhol becomes a point of gravitation for those fringe-dwellers and stars obsessed with placing their sensoria on purée, fulfilling earlier fantasies of problem-exchange: "When I think of my high school days, all I can remember, really, are the long walks to school, through the Czech ghetto with the babushkas and overalls on the clotheslines, in McKeesport, Pennsylvania. I wasn't amazingly popular, but I had some nice friends. I wasn't very close to anyone, although I guess I wanted to be, because when I would see the kids telling one another their problems, I felt left out" (*Philosophy*, 22). With drugs,

Warhol finds a continual source of problems—but no problem himself. Trucking in “narcodollars,” Warhol transports the psychological fixation on the intoxicating paracomestible substance into the realm of aesthetics.<sup>8</sup> Living out a childhood dream of being a problem receptacle, Warhol is able to do so primarily by allying himself with one wild child after another. For though Warhol does self-admittedly take diet pills during the 60s, his use of this substance is sanctioned by both medical and legal communities, and does not rival the more cavalier use made of it by the A-heads. Warhol never becomes an addict. His high does not place him in biological or jurisprudential jeopardy: “Andy knew what he was doing with drugs. He was also very careful to take only what was legal, for as he started to gain notoriety, he knew that he would be a prime target for the police. At the beginning of 1963 he got a prescription for Obetrol, a diet pill that produced a sense of infinitely expanding time without inducing the teeth-grinding verbosity or the awful crash of Dexedrine and many of the other amphetamine pills so easily attainable in the sixties” (Bockris, 132). Even when he does consume a mood-altering substance, the report is couched in the language of contingency: “There was a Halloween party at Studio 54, Stevie kept giving me more drinks and then somebody shoved a Quaalude in my mouth and I was going to shove it to the side but it got stuck and then I drank vodka and it went down and that was a big mistake” (*Diaries*, Monday, October 31, 1977). At one point, Warhol jokingly entertains the notion of becoming a drug dealer himself: “Everybody gave me Quaaludes and I always accept them because they’re so expensive and I can

---

<sup>8</sup> “What goes hand in hand with her [Emma Bovary’s] decline is a kind of crash economy, an exorbitant expenditure with no reserve: we call this ‘narcodollars’” (Ronell, 109). Unlike Emma Bovary, Warhol does not spend his own narcodollars, but manages the expenditures of others. In this sense, he qualifies as a sort of stockbroker.

sell them” (Sunday, April 1, 1979). A consummate lover of money, Warhol can’t help but gasp at the economics of drug ingestion—hence his affection for the junkie debutante epitomized by Brigid Berlin or Edie Sedgwick. Ever at the fringe of the illicit and the improper, Warhol deliberately positions himself at the scene of drug intake where as voyeur he can participate without participating (like his 1985 sculpture at New York City nightclub Area, he is there by not being there).<sup>9</sup>

In Ronell’s analysis, substance addiction in fact echoes the primordial longings of Being, which finds itself located in a thrown “there” that mysteriously becomes desirable (through addiction, Being rearticulates its ontological anomie). Rooted in what Martin Heidegger, in *Being and Time*, terms “the thrownness of Dasein,” drug addiction is a secondary development representing an earlier fluctuation within Being (just as, for Freud, secondary repression grows out of primary repression). Lost in the hallucinatory object, Dasein, or “Being-there,” fails to locate itself in an ever receding time and space (spaciotemporally excessive, it is “on the run,” “ahead of itself”) (41). Anxious, Dasein diverts its attention from care, or *Sorge*, concentrating it instead in the addictive substrate of the world, diminishing its anxiousness through a loss of consciousness. What results is a narcotic drive in league with Thanatos: “In anxiety, Dasein is taken back fully to its sheer uncanniness, and hit with vertigo...But this rush gives Dasein its thrownness as something possible, and as something that can be repeated. However, it gives Dasein repeatability as something that can be taken up in a resolution (*Entschluss*) in Being-toward-death” (44). Recording the work of this narcotic thrust, Warhol captures the

---

<sup>9</sup> “Andy Warhol did an elegant piece, which has been inadequately documented, for understandable reasons. It was a sculpture that wasn’t there. He was given an alcove and if he was in the club, he might stand in it for a bit. Otherwise it was an invisible sculpture” (Haden-Guest, 266-267).

behavior and mores of Mole People, coke fiends and smackheads, beings unto an imminent death. Moreover, if space has been a primary concern for Warhol, as I have stated in the first section of this book, then, through the intervention of the druggie, time reveals itself to Warhol as similarly troublesome. A fourth dimension of objects, time follows them like a shadow, revealing a temporal flux in which all consciousness is steeped without hope of extrication. Things are products of a specific temporal order; hence *POPism* and the *Diaries* make note of trends, fads and styles, social data spotlighting the immersion of taste in time.<sup>10</sup> From a phenomenological point of view, what Edmund Husserl termed an internal time-consciousness reveals its workings: somehow, the mind finds a way to represent time as time. The junkie's contribution to phenomenological analysis comes with the shake-up he effects upon the ITC. Speeding it up, slowing it down, poking a hole in it, the junkie plays with time-consciousness as a way of subverting capitalist time. For Debord, the time of capitalist production becomes one commodity among others: "The time of production, time-as-commodity, is an infinite accumulation of equivalent intervals. It is irreversible time made abstract: each segment must demonstrate by the clock its purely quantitative equality with all other segments. This time represents nothing in its effective reality aside from its *exchangeability*" (Thesis #147). Pseudo-cyclical,

---

<sup>10</sup> See Edmund Husserl's *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969). For Husserl, the problem of time is a problem of the consciousness of time: how is it exactly that the human subject is able to perceive temporal flux as temporal flux in the lived experience of time? "We can only say that this flux is something which we name in conformity with what is constituted, but it is nothing temporally 'Objective.' It is absolute subjectivity and has the absolute properties of something to be denoted metaphysically as 'flux,' as a point of actuality, primal sourcepoint, that from which springs the 'now,' and so on" (100). Husserl's most fundamental point is that even the now-point involves recollection, retention and protention: time-consciousness is generated by a complicated relation among what is phenomenally given and what the mind can remember (that a melody can be perceived as a whole, despite the fact that each note immediately passes, points to the work of the internal time-consciousness).

spectacular time carves out a space for relaxation by reserving some temporal blocks for rejuvenation and play: “In its most advanced sectors, a highly concentrated capitalism has begun selling ‘fully equipped’ blocks of time, each of which is a complete commodity combining a variety of other commodities. This is the logic behind the appearance, within an expanding economy of ‘services’ and leisure activities, of the ‘all-inclusive’ purchase of spectacular forms of housing, of collective pseudo-travel, of participation in cultural consumption and even of sociability itself, in the form of ‘exciting conversations,’ ‘meetings with celebrities’ and suchlike” (Thesis #152). For the junkie, work and play know an alternate relation: (1) his work doesn’t matter, since it is illegal; (2) he works only to play, foraging for drugs on the charmed space of the street; (3) ultimately, all is play, including even perception itself.

Sabotaging spectacular time, the junkie erects a competing temporal order—for this reason the character of the drug user intrigues workaholic Warhol, whose triumph is to incorporate the druggie’s clock into his literary and cinematic ventures. Following *lumpenproletariat* time—that is, the time of the unproductive, or the counterproductive—the junkie knows only the twisted time of disorientation and ITC implosion. Taking in psychotropic pills, powders and liquids, the drug consumer facilitates poetic reflections on the meaning of time itself. The “sense of expanding time” referred to by Bockris—an intensity experienced first-hand by Andy in the 60s—is the era’s greatest illusion. The euphoric text of *a* demonstrates this sense of expansion. Filled with stutters, run-ons and fractured sentences, it testifies to the amphetamine rush and the work it effects on consciousness. When the Duchess

exclaims “A poke, a pole is the, is the biggest, is the most beautiful up there is, is the most, well not intravenously because I was on it for two years, I was on meta-amphetamine,” her text veers frantically as she struggles to cram it all into one strain (208). Under these conditions, all that can result is *anacoluthon*, the explosion of one thought into supernumerary cosmic tributaries, each finding its own path, yet never converging. As drugs are administered, perceptions stray. Time no longer rests transparent, but thickens into an opaque quiddity which demands further processing. Treating time as spectacular commodity in keeping with Debord’s remarks, Warhol takes as his object the skewed time of the junkie. Isolating those special cases in which the ITC has been altered by chemical ingestion, Warhol continues the drug narrative tradition begun two centuries earlier by Thomas De Quincey, whose 1821 *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* set the trend for drug narration in motion and marked Romanticism’s preoccupation with chemically-induced liminal states. Like De Quincey, he documents the phenomenal changes effected by psychotropic drugs, giving the drug addict a literary legacy of which he is the impetus and star.<sup>11</sup>

### Miraculation

Drugs represent Warhol’s Romanticism better than any other object or category of experience; placing him close to death, they articulate Warhol’s liaison with the obscene and as such refer to other unsavory inclinations, such as his interest

---

<sup>11</sup> See Thomas De Quincey’s *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (London: Penguin Classics, 1986). Obsessed with his own psychic transformations as the drug opium, in the tinctured form laudanum, floods his system, De Quincey makes the drug narrative central to Romanticism, packaging it for other eras and epochs.

in pornography (as demonstrated by films like *Blow Job* (1963), *Couch* (1964), *Vinyl* (1965), *Bike Boy* (1967) or *Trash* (1970), the cocks he Polaroids, or his 1977 Torso series).<sup>12</sup> For with drugs comes the potential for overdose, the chance that death might follow ingestion, that privileged intake might produce an untimely exit. Yet if one is able to skirt the dangers afforded by overdose, there is, as in the special case of speed, the mania for performance, the overwhelming desire to act—the perfect counterpoint to the performative and biological zero of overdose. As described by Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus*, drugs perform the important function of turning the junkie into a body without organs—that is, as one in whom all differentials dry up and all that remains is a uniform, undifferentiated field preceding and giving birth to organic difference:

The body without organs is an egg; it is crisscrossed with axes and thresholds, with latitudes and longitudes and geodesic lines, traversed by *gradients* marking the transitions and becomings, the destinations of the subject developing along these particular vectors. Nothing here is representative; rather, it is all life and lived experience: the actual, lived emotion of having breasts does not resemble breasts, it does not represent them, any more than a predestined zone in the egg resembles the organ that it is going to be stimulated to produce within itself. Nothing but bands of intensity, potentials, thresholds, and gradients. A harrowing, emotionally overwhelming experience, which brings the schizo as close as possible to matter, to a burning, living center of matter (19).

---

<sup>12</sup> Holly Woodlawn recounts the day Warhol photographed her cock for inclusion in his cock collection in her *A Low Life in High Heels* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991): "Andy honed in on my crotch, released a soft gasp, and put his hand up to his mouth. 'It looks so big, Holly. How big is it?' 'Andy!' I snapped back in embarrassment. 'Please stop it. I'm a woman.' 'Can I take pictures of it?' 'What?!' 'You don't have to take off your clothes. I just want to photograph it, Holly, just like it is now.' 'Andy, you're just a dirty old man!' 'Come in the back,' he invited, and led the way as I followed. Sure enough, Andy dragged out the Polaroid and snapped away at my crotch. I didn't mind, though I made him promise not to tell anyone whose crotch it was" (291).

Deterritorialized, the body without organs, or *le CSO*, comes into existence as a sign of ego-loss; the undifferentiated, egglike body also becomes a site of *miraculation*, or magical production coincident with the schizoid experience of being strung out: “An attraction-machine now takes the place, or may take the place, of a repulsion-machine: a miraculating machine succeeding the paranoiac machine” (11).<sup>13</sup> Outside itself, and hence outside normal coordinates of space and time, the junkie-CSO knows no impossibility: all that it dreams achieves instant reality. There is no outside, no exterior, either temporally or spatially: the present moment expands infinitely forward and backward into an actualized future and a present past, while the body’s matter regresses to a magical state of pluripotency. A miracle itself, the organless body knows only immediacy and euphoria.

Warhol “Girlettes” Jackie Curtis, Holly Woodlawn and Candy Darling, among others, all become miraculating machines, conduits for the magical, metaleptic process of glamour production, as demonstrated by Woodlawn’s reports of Curtis’ drive to be a star in her *A Low Life in High Heels*: “‘If you don’t dress right, Curtis, you’ll never get on TV,’ warned Jackie’s mother. ‘But I do dress right,’ defended Curtis. ‘People try to copy me, they really do.’ ‘Oh, Curtis, please,’ the mother said. ‘What are you going to do with your life?’ ‘Listen, Ma,’ Curtis barked. ‘What are

---

<sup>13</sup> Deleuze’s and Guattari’s use of the term *miraculation* bears direct reference to Marx’s employment of it in the service of political economy: “Machines and agents cling so closely to capital that their functioning appears to be miraculated by it. Everything seems objectively to be produced by capital as quasi-cause. As Marx observes, *in the beginning* capitalists are necessarily conscious of the opposition between capital and labor, and of the use of capital as a means of extorting surplus labor. But a perverted, bewitched world quickly comes into being, as capital increasingly plays the role of a recording surface that falls back on (*se rabat sur*) all of production” (11). Capital thus switches cause and effect such that all becomes the result of capital, which persists as a full body on whose plentitude all else is dependent.

you going to say when I win the Oscar?’ ‘Nothing’” (77).<sup>14</sup> As miraculating machine, the body of Jackie Curtis transcends its existence as mere “ambulatory archive” of female poses, since through the chemical pep of speed it becomes an actual female body, at least from its vantage point as CSO.<sup>15</sup> Documenting the process of miraculation, and thereby miraculating his own dreams of fame and glamour, Warhol directs his gaze toward those individuals in whom drugs produce the schizoid state necessary for both ego dissolution and aggrandizement—hence the attention he gives to a tripped-out Eric Emerson in *The Chelsea Girls*, preserving his delusional monologue for posterity as social relic and miracle:

And Eric’s reel is the most retarded of them all, though also the most ecstatic. He undulates, by himself, while colored lights play over a body—his own—that he finds supremely desirable, sufficient unto the day: “Do you ever groove on your own body?” he asks, rhetorically. He speaks for himself and to himself, but he is also speaking to Andy the filmmaker, and may be speaking *for* Andy, especially when he says, “Sometimes I hate to be touched.” Eric is saturated with sensation but also seems afloat in a sensory deprivation tank: “I can’t see a thing, except me—that’s all there is to see, as far as I’m concerned” (Koestenbaum, 124).

---

<sup>14</sup> Woodlawn’s quote is actually taken from Curtis’ unpublished and unfinished autobiography, *A Storm of Kisses*. For other examples of glamour as miraculation, see Woodlawn’s descriptions of Candy Darling’s state of mind: “Candy was still blond as ever! She was aloof and arrogant and would show up on the set with her manager at her side constantly fussing over her. Miss Darling had a severe case of Norma Desmonditis” (187). Woodlawn uses the epithet “Les Girlettes” to describe the trio Woodlawn/Curtis/Darling, as it has been these drags in particular who have dominated Warhol’s screens (Woodlawn stars in *Trash* (1970) and *Women in Revolt* (1972); Curtis and Darling star in *Women in Revolt*). Finally, outside the Warhol oeuvre, Divine’s performance as Dawn Davenport in John Waters’ *Female Trouble* (1972) provides an important example of the schizoid’s relation to glamour. Identifying as “the top model in the country,” she turns her obese body and acid-scarred face into works of beauty via the work of insanity.

<sup>15</sup> The full quote reads: “Among other things, drag queens are living testimony to the way women used to want to be, the way some people still want them to be, and the way some women still actually want to be. Drags are ambulatory archives of ideal moviestar womanhood. They perform a documentary service, usually consecrating their lives to keeping the glittering alternative alive for (not-too-close) inspection” (*Philosophy*, 54). My argument is that a drag queen like Jackie Curtis does not primarily perform a documentary service, but rather uses her body as site of miraculation—this process taking place with the presence of uppers, since it is these chemicals which psychologically induce the magical experience of plenitude.

Existing at that strange vantage point from which ego becomes all and nothing, Emerson dramatizes the schizoid's transcendence of the law of contradiction itself. Set against a reel in which various colors are projected onto cast members, Eric's trip highlights the fact that, for Warhol, everybody is a screen, except the body without organs, which resists outside projection through its own manic maneuvering. Giving way only to its own projections, the CSO uses its surface to project personal fantasies of magical production much in the way that, for the Freud of *The Ego and the Id*, the ego represents a corporeal projection in its own right.<sup>16</sup> Warhol's unwavering attention to miraculating machines like Eric Emerson or Jackie Curtis of course underscores his own skewed relationship to celebrity, the twist being that documenting the trips, hallucinations and psychotic episodes of his coterie bring him fame proper, while burdening the drug users in his vicinity with the dubious psychoanalytic celebrity reserved for the case study. Taking their place beside Little Hans, the Wolf Man, Dora and the Rat Man, Eric Emerson, Jackie Curtis and others become perpetual oddities and objects of curiosity. Famous for being "off," they present their schizoid pleasures to the public, whose appetite for freaks ensures their place in history.

Yet in terms of *The Chelsea Girls*, the best example of miraculation comes not with Eric's disembodied conversation with himself, but with Ondine's transformation

---

<sup>16</sup> Even though Reel 10, "Color Lights on Cast," contains a soundtrack, projection instructions are that the reel is to be run in silence, to the effect that the coincident reel, "Eric Says All," provides the only dialogue. Though silenced, Reel 10 presents some important moments, as when Eric states "I'd do anything to get someone to care. I'd do anything to get someone to listen," or "I hate comedowns." Regarding Reel 10, Warhol demonstrated a similar attachment to the psychedelic technique of projection in paintings as well. 1986's *Camouflage Statue of Liberty*, *Camouflage Joseph Beuys* and *Camouflage Last Supper* and 1988's camouflage *Self-Portraits* provide related examples of psychedelic projection, a 60s technique which Warhol would never lose.

into Pope Ondine. While at first it appears that papal ascendancy might be purely performative for Ondine, *né* Bob Olivo, a nasty battle with penitent Rona Page ensures that another schizoid delusion has been taken literally: Ondine *is* the Pope, and don't forget it! Reassuring us that there are no roles in *Chelsea Girls*, that what you see is what you get (the business acronym would be WYSIWYG), Ondine throws the tantrum to end all tantrums when he feels that his performance has been read as virtual, not actual. While in Reel 2, shown coincidentally with a reel of Nico trimming her bangs in the presence of Eric Emerson and her son Ari, we witness Ondine's succor of Ingrid Superstar as he observes her confession and dispenses expert advice (Reel 1), in Reel 11, shown coincidentally with a reel of Nico crying (Reel 12), we see Ondine run amok with crazed anger at a disbelieving parishioner who has dared question his authority and authenticity. Out of the loop, she has forgotten that the characters in the film are not acting, that the point of *Chelsea Girls* is to present reality, not to simulate it. When Rona Page, supposedly "in character," yet fast leaping out of it, makes the *faux pas* of intimating that Ondine is not the real Pope, all hell breaks loose. Throwing Coca-Cola violently in her face, Ondine defends his Popedom with the nastiness and vehemence appropriate to one whose mortality has been threatened: "Who are you supposed to be? Little Miss Wonder?" Berating her as a "bitch," "cunt" and "whore," Ondine beats her mercilessly, obviously breaking character and forcing her to do the same. Performing no small miracle, Warhol has created a social chain reaction producing the real from the simulated; erupting onto the screen, reality puts its grit and grime on display. Stephen Koch describes the scene in more vivid detail:

“Well, let me tell you something, my dear little Miss Phony. You’re a phony. You’re a disgusting phony. May god forgive you.” And Ondine slaps her again, more violently, then leaps up in a paroxysmic rage. With his open hands he begins to strike the cowering bewildered girl around the head and shoulders. “You Goddamned phony, get the hell off this set. Get out.” . . . “Stop it,” she says. “Stop it. Don’t touch me.” She is unable to move, but her voice is, as last, authentic. Ondine rages on. “How dare you call me a phony? Little Miss Phony, you disgusting fool,” he begins to strike her again. She leaps up and runs (95-96).

As Deleuze and Guattari point out, the schizoid knows no representation or simulation: for this boundary creature, all attains the status of reality. Living at “that unbearable point where the mind touches matter and lives its every intensity, consumes it,” the miraculating machine actualizes every conceivable possibility (Deleuze and Guattari, 20). From its vantage point, nothing is phony, and any assertion of the world as phony will produce the requisite outburst—an overflow or *bornage* rooted in self-preservation. In light of Deleuze’s and Guattari’s plans for an anti-Oedipal, de-territorialized project, the rabidity of Ondine’s outburst alludes to far more than postmodern debates surrounding any crisis in authenticity or collapse of the legitimizing metanarrative. Rather, Ondine acts out because, from his sped-up perspective, he truly is the Pope and must be respected as such.

Another drug fiend commanding respect both in *The Chelsea Girls* and in *Factory life* in the 1960s is Brigid Polk, Pop’s famous Duchess. Like Ondine, she too occupies a major role in the film, catapulting Warhol into the limelight with her camera-friendly junkie behavior. Most importantly, unlike so many of Warhol’s

beloved addicts, she will not miraculate, displaying little interest in generating glamour or in attaining the insane levels of notoriety craved by so many members of the Warhol entourage—hence her dislike of so many Warhol ingénues and proto-celebs, as when, in *Chelsea Girls*, she relays to Ingrid Superstar, “I hate movies. The Underground is not my scene.” In *Chelsea Girls*, and in her off-screen life, the Duchess refuses the role of miraculating machine, focusing instead on pushing pills, poking girls with needles and holding court for Ingrid Superstar (and others). No transformation is effected by what passes into her system—no psychological trick convinces her that she has become another entity, or that she will, through the magic of chemical alteration, metamorphose into a larger-than-life fashion creature. Though referred to as “Duchess” by Ingrid Superstar in the film, the nickname makes perfect sense, since Brigid truly is “royal” in her own right: publishing tycoons for the Hearst empire, her parents are loaded, and she qualifies both as heiress and debutante (as well as, to use the later language of the Area crowd in the 80s, celebutante).<sup>17</sup> Thus while Ondine’s claim of Popedom is clearly the product of magical thinking, Brigid’s acceptance of the Duchess role finds its basis in socioeconomic fact. Her other nickname with the Warhol crowd, Brigid Polk, also demonstrates a refusal of miraculation, referring not to some mysterious transformatory process, but rather to a

---

<sup>17</sup> For a closer look at the celebutantes and their involvement with NYC nightclubs Area and Tunnel, see “Kamikaze Kids” in *The Last Party* (317-327). Warhol’s influence on this fresh crop of freaks cannot be elided: “James St. James was talking into my tape recorder. We were in a small room in the Chelsea Hotel on Twenty-third street. ‘This is James St. James. I moved here when I saw the *Cars* video by Andy Warhol. It was Dianne Brill who inspired me. I wanted to *be* her,’ he intoned. St. James has frail, fine features. A metal crescent several inches long was piercing his lower lip and chin. Michael Alig, who was alongside him on the bed, interjected, ‘With me, it was an Edie Sedgwick T-shirt. I bought it in a thrift shop in Chicago—’”(317). Haden-Guest, pace Michael Musto, credits Warhol’s death with precipitating the “death of downtown,” a void which the celebutantes and clubkids will rush to fill. Again, party monster Dianne Brill figures as a sign: “Musto notes gloomily that a trimmed-down Dianne Brill had ‘showed up at the Tunnel looking like any other tasteful blonde and escorting her good friend Cheryl Tiegs (this was before her birthday luncheon at Le Cirque)’” (302).

simple act: the amphetamine poke. If her first sobriquet, "Duchess," functions as a riff on her riches, then the second, "Brigid Polk," uses the coyness of the homonym to indicate her identification with skin-popping.<sup>18</sup> For Brigid does not merely receive pokes, but, along with Pope Ondine, gives them: she too is a center of generosity, a bearer of gifts.<sup>19</sup> Yet unlike Ondine, the injections she bequeaths upon the faithful in her entourage do not cause her to glamourize her role. Antithesis to Ondine's extravagance comes Brigid's pragmatism: while he assumes the role of spiritual guru, she selects the more grounded persona of "poker." For Brigid, pokes are not miraculous, nor do they precipitate mystical events: pokes are pokes.

As pragmatic entity, the Duchess comes across as no more than a shrewd businesswoman. When compared with the film's other stars, such as a blathering Eric Emerson, an abusive Mary Woronov or a pussy-whipped Gerard Malanga, she appears under the guise of Reality Principle.<sup>20</sup> As we watch the Duchess in action, we learn the ins and outs of drug dealing, including a new vocabulary and onomastics. "I'm gonna call Dropout now," she announces, then, slightly later, "I

---

<sup>18</sup> "The Factory A-men were mostly fags (they knew each other from Riis Park in Brooklyn), except for the Duchess, who was a notorious dyke. They were incredibly skinny, except for the Duchess, who was incredibly fat. And they all mainlined, except for the Duchess, who skin-popped" (*POPism*, 62).

<sup>19</sup> In Reel 11, Ondine casually rinses a needle in Coca Cola before using it to inject himself. Such behavior points to the film's value as documentary of drug praxis. The wonderful naïveté of Ondine comes across as shocking, given the current prevalence of the AIDS virus. Like pre-AIDS pornography, *The Chelsea Girls* contains real danger—a danger known only to future generations, yet imperceptible to those budding stars obliviously performing perilous actions on camera.

<sup>20</sup> I refer to Malanga as "pussy-whipped" on the basis of his response to his mother's behavior in "The Gerard Malanga Story" (Reel 8). In this *tableau vivant*, Gerard is berated by his mother, played by Marie Mencken, for having chosen Mary Woronov as paramour: "What is she *doing* here? Tell me—who is she?" Throughout the reel, Mary seethes in silence while Marie harangues Gerard, who seems more interested in his manicure and coiffure than in either Mary or Marie. Koestenbaum describes the scene's hateful nuances in greater detail: "Marie is hard on Gerard, who wears unmanly rebel apparel (striped pants, mesh shirt, beads): she whips the bed, berates him for his 'filthy towel,' whips the towel, and scornfully calls it 'last night's towel.' How dare he leave last night's towel on the bed! 'I wish I had a daughter!' she cries. Marie and Mary are doubles, though they don't address each other, and though Marie's voluble cruelty, ultimately maternal and solicitous, can't rival Mary's silent spite" ("Torture," 123).

moved my stash out of the air conditioner and Dropout took it.” Speaking street-jive, the Duchess, street creature herself, leads her audience through the workings of a subaltern, criminal order. Like Hanoi Hannah in the film’s Reels 5 and 6, Brigid dominates those around her, who have no choice but to obey her every word: neither she nor Hannah take no for an answer, subjugating all within reach.<sup>21</sup> “Getting all the bubbles out,” the Duchess prepares a poke for Ingrid, who nervously interrogates, “What are you gonna do with me?” Yet the Duchess is not solely a supplier of ups: downs are hers to give as well. “Want a downer?,” she asks Ingrid just after administering intravenous meth, implying the existence of a chemical rollercoaster available to all. “I need a pill. Where’s my down bag?” she inquires, making it clear that ups and downs are stored separately, that each inhabits its own niche, and that the Duchess has access to both worlds—an access she is more than willing to share. Silver, the color so dear to Warhol, takes on a new tenor here, as Brigid connects it specifically with the storage of amphetamines in aluminum foil: “...one little silver packet under my pillow,” she coos. When Brigid points to some aluminum foil and makes the assertion “This is where it all started,” she both assumes ownership of the Factory look while rooting that look in the drug experience. Unlike other castmembers, only Brigid pulls Warhol directly into the fray. Warhol figures negatively into her life as poke-giver: “This is why I don’t go around the Factory—Andy’s paranoid about me and my drugs.” Claiming his *argentomania* and underscoring his hypocrisy with regard to substance abuse, she forces Warhol to

---

<sup>21</sup> Mary Woronov plays the role of Hanoi Hannah. As Hanoi, she keeps Ingrid Superstar confined under a desk as her personal sex slave, initiates various catfights with co-star International Velvet and causes Pepper to suffer a psychological breakdown. Cold, cruel and downright nasty, Woronov is the film’s quintessential harpie.

appear. When Ingrid asks Brigid, “You really like to destroy people, don’t you?” the question could be directed to Andy himself, pointing to Brigid’s existence as Warhol double (and making sense of the special form of disdain and love Warhol reserves for her alone). Rattling off a catalogue of pills and their respective colors, the Duchess seems to offer a cornucopia of sensation. Codeine, Morphine, Demerol: the contents of her Down Bag promise a panoply of colors and a variety of cerebral states, while also alluding to the experience of pain. When she claims “I only have ten more for the night,” it becomes apparent that the Duchess will soon be out foraging for more pills, riding her famous bicycle through the West Village. Implying a continuum, the druggie’s pills come one after the other without interruption like so many Campbell’s Soup cans. A paradigmatic example of serial reproduction, pills and aluminum packets multiply promiscuously, comprising a mathematically infinite series.

While *The Chelsea Girls* reveals the Duchess as non-miraculating, the best description of her pragmatism comes at the conclusion of Mary Woronov’s *Swimming Underground*, when the Duchess’ body-image is at stake (in fact, its stability precipitates Woronov’s exit from the Underground).<sup>22</sup> Furious at the Duchess for arranging to have best friend and roommate Jane strung out on heroin through a mutual acquaintance named Crocodile (or the Cockadial, as Jane calls him), Woronov seeks to destroy Brigid: “The minute he [Woronov’s dealer] was gone I went to his refrigerator, which was stuffed with little aluminum packets. I got down

---

<sup>22</sup> For a discussion of the phenomenological construct of the body-image, see Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge Classics, 2002), as well as Elizabeth Grosz’s *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). For both Merleau-Ponty and Grosz, the ability of the human organism to navigate successfully space and time points to the phenomenal existence of a body-image, without which there is only uncoordination and chaos. I also read the stability of the Duchess’ body-image metaphorically, transferring it to her intellectual image as well (hence Warhol’s reliance on her in, for example, *Philosophy*).

on my knees and whispered, ‘Please, God, you fucking monster, take whatever you want, but give me one last fuckin’ crack at the Duchess. Just let me see her again, I’m begging you, you prick’” (219). Discovering from Ingrid that Brigid and Andy are lunching at Rockefeller Plaza, Woronov devours the refrigerator’s amphetamine contents and marches across town to raise a ruckus. What she encounters stuns her: though morbidly obese, the Duchess demonstrates more physical grace than even a svelte vixen like International Velvet or any of Warhol’s other “Big Babies” could have hoped to muster.<sup>23</sup> Space is no mystery to Brigid, who hasn’t the slightest difficulty cutting through it while balanced precariously on blades:

They were easy to spot; it was after lunch and no one else was there. Andy sat ringside at a table with a pink tablecloth, applauding and laughing over his seafood salad, while the Duchess skated by him, as graceful as a little killer whale. I couldn’t believe it. She wasn’t just good, she was show class, skating beautifully—backwards, figures, dives, leaps—her great form balanced effortlessly and swooping past me in perfect circles. I couldn’t hate her, she was too good; instead I felt condemned, the victim of my own brutal search, when the oddest thing happened. I vanished. I was screaming like an enraged Lucifer but nobody heard, and while Andy ignored me and the Duchess stared straight through me, I was dragged by the attendant out of the icy white ring of heaven (220).

Rooted firmly in her own body, the Duchess knows only the miracle of existence, the incredible thickness of reality. Unlike Ondine, she has no need of taking off for an

---

<sup>23</sup> “In ’65 a lot of the girls had the Big Baby look—short little-girl dresses with puffy little sleeves—and they wore them with light-colored tights and those flat little shoes with the straps across them. The tights weren’t really tights, though, because when the girls bent over you could see the tops of their stockings where they were attached to garter belts. It’s hard to believe that young girls were still wearing contraptions like panty girdles, but they were. (Underwear wouldn’t completely disappear until ’66, when girls like International Velvet would walk down the street in the dead of winter with no stockings and no underwear. Granted, they’d have on fur coats—but then they were fur *minicoats!*)” (*POPism*, 115).

outer space of alternate identities; as Duchess, she finds her end internally, and thus surprises with sudden bursts of grace and *savoir faire*. Brigid Polk knows her body intimately, and so she is able to use her body-image to perform complicated physical tricks—a shocker, when one considers that Warhol junkie-stars generally end up possessing the least amount of influence over their physical destinies. Never falling prey to the dual traps of miraculation or overdose, the Duchess skates by both pitfalls. Outside Ondine’s heaven and Edie Sedgwick’s sleep, Brigid Berlin comes off as the strangest of Warhol’s junkies—strange by virtue of her incredible ability to survive and to retain grace in a vortex of instability and volatility.<sup>24</sup>

### Narcosis

If uppers like speed and cocaine cause their user to condense into a single performative point, then opiates like heroin and downers like barbiturates and sleeping pills lead their consumers to the existential edge separating life from death. Thus Jean-Michel Basquiat continually falls asleep throughout the *Diaries*: opiates produce narcolepsy, poisoning him at the brink of life and death. Carrying one away from pure performativity and egomania, heroin inspires sleep, pushing its user in the direction of the vegetative. The hypnagogic state induced by opiates and the collapse

---

<sup>24</sup> Pat Ast also demonstrates grace and talent, as relayed by Woodlawn: “Pat Ast was always offering free entertainment on the beach. There she was, her stout legs planted firmly in the sand, her face painted brighter than the neon in Times Square, her dazzling eyes big and alive as she sang arias to the two muscle boys flanking her sides. She swayed back and forth, her fabulous Halston chiffon muu-muu rippling in the brisk sea wind, belting out operas to anyone who’d listen” (266). Ast stars in *Heat*, and is Halston’s assistant. Though other sources describe her obesity as revolting—for example, the July 1, 1971 *L.A. Times* article “Skinny the Only In Thing? Fat Chance” in Time Capsule 7, or *WWD*’s July 16, 1971 article “Fatty Acid” in Time Capsule 7—Woodlawn’s presents Ast in a more positive light. Like Brigid Polk, Pat Ast surprises her skinny counterparts by her relationship to the delicate.

following barbiturate ingestion initiate a hallucinatory streaming which is a prelude to mortal end—the disembodiment and disorientation produced by opiate and downer ingestion wed the dream and the dreamer to death, causing the heroin and sleeping pill user to walk the thinnest line possible between existence and nonentity. As such, “sleep” functions as an important trope for Warhol: while one class of junkies never experience slumber, another slips into an unconsciousness from which it might never emerge. Consequently, sleep becomes a Factory in-joke, achieving its maximum resonance when in 1963 Warhol makes poet and boyfriend John Giorno the star of his first full-length silent film *Sleep*.<sup>25</sup> According to Warhol in *POPism*, while the film would be read by Factory outsiders as no more than a visual ode to semiconsciousness, it would be more correctly read by insiders as an elaborate drug joke:

I could never finally figure out if more things happened in the sixties because there was more awake time for them to happen in (since so many people were on amphetamine), or if people started taking amphetamine because there were so many things to do that they needed to have more awake time to do them in. It was probably both...I only slept two or three hours a night from '65 through '67, but I used to see people who hadn't slept for days as a time and they'd say things like “I'm hitting my ninth day and it's glorious!”...

Seeing everybody so up all the time made me think that sleep was becoming pretty obsolete, so I decided I'd better quickly do a movie of a person sleeping (“1960-1963,” 33).

---

<sup>25</sup> Technically, *Kiss* was Warhol's first silent film, but since it was intended to be viewed in truncated blips before various films at Mekas' Film-Makers' Coop, *Kiss* functions more as a series whose elements might be removed and repositioned, while *Sleep* is more of an unbroken totality.

Thus although even Warhol allies the film with the world of the speed freak, a more sinister reading of the film places it closer to the heroin and prescription med user's domain, where sleep is not so much a reference to the obsolescent as a mortal threat. Unlike the amphetamine poke, which expands, projects and rejuvenates, the heroin poke and the digested Demerol slow, arrest, enervate.

Interested in muteness and silence, Warhol quite deliberately casts his gaze in the direction of heroin users Edie Sedgwick and Jean-Michel Basquiat, who for him contrast significantly with upper aficionados like the Duchess, Ondine or Liza Minnelli.<sup>26</sup> In a chapter aptly entitled "Stillness," Stephen Koch traces out the implications of Warhol's attachment to the unspeakable: "Such is the allure of Warhol to the critical mind, the intuition that his silence is—or was—connected to something that a good critical work-over would make speak. I'm convinced that Warhol has a theme—indeed, one of his grand Themes—from which all his important work grows. And I think that by now we have descended through enough circles of perception to name it flat out, without orotund hysteria of further hermeneutical flower picking. The theme is death. Death" (133). Placing himself in the creative vicinity of those individuals who push their physical limits in an open courtship of death, Warhol sets up camp on a biological abyss. To approach death is to transcend anxieties of exchange, to defer infinitely the question of acquisition. Seen in this context, the *Giorno of Sleep* is riveting because he has gone beyond exchange, regressing it to its most basic formulation: the lungs' metabolic and automatic

---

<sup>26</sup> Edie's favorite form of heroin intake is the speedball: "Speedball! Speed and heroin. That was the first time I had a shot in each arm. Closed my eyes. Opened my arms. Closed my fists, and jab, jab. A shot of cocaine and speed, and a shot of heroin....A speedball is from another world. It's a little bit dangerous. Pure coke, pure speed, and pure sex. Wow! The ultimate in climax" (Stein, 216).

swapping of oxygen for carbon dioxide. On the subject of death, Warhol is reticent; *Philosophy's* "Death" chapter promises to be "all about it," yet delivers only the words "I'm so sorry to hear about it. I just thought that things were magic and that it would never happen," and "I don't believe in it, because you're not around to know that it's happened. I can't say anything because I'm not prepared for it" (121-123). Master of vicariousness, Warhol lets others die for him. Even the near-death experience inspires him, as in Billy Name's overdose and Warhol's shooting by Valerie Solanas.<sup>27</sup> Death constitutes Warhol's prime limit, the asymptote he bumps up against through the actions of others, some of whom cross the threshold, making his art even hipper through the glamour of their departure. Watching *Giorno sleep*, we experience the catharsis of mortality, witnessing the liminal state represented by somnolence. Whether we haven't slept in a month or have just woken up from a heroin coma, the film speaks to our trip.

Youthquaker Edie Sedgwick represents Warhol's first important overdose. Although by the time death claims her she has left Warhol's orbit and returned to her family's home in Santa Barbara, California, her demise by barbiturate overdose cannot shed its affiliation with Warhol, who is blamed for it by Factory insiders and outsiders alike—this despite the fact that she had severed ties with him of her own accord by the time of her death. Even *Chelsea Girls* star Marie Mencken erupts in

---

<sup>27</sup> Koch relays Billy Name's overdose in "Stillness" (134). Born Billy Linich, Billy Name became the inspiration behind much of the earliest Factory. Warhol credits him with the Factory's silver look: "Billy was responsible for the silver at the Factory. He covered the crumbling walls and the pipes in different grades of silver foil—regular tinfoil in some areas, and a higher grade of Mylar in others. He bought cans of silver paint and sprayed everything with it, right down to the toilet bowl" ("1960-1963," 64). His departure marked the end of an era: "One morning when we got to the Factory, the door to the darkroom at the back where Billy had locked himself in for two years was open and he was gone. The room smelled horrible. There were literally thousands of cigarette butts in it and astrology-type charts all over the walls." His final words are contained in the note he tacks to the wall: "Andy—I am not here anymore but I am fine Love, Billy" (299-300). Significantly, his words end *POPism*.

anger after Edie overdoses, as her words on an envelope in Time Capsule -17 chillingly proclaim: “You made her take the needle she says...SOB! Bastard—Cock!...Blow your bra(ins) out...See what you have done to our Edie! Creep.”<sup>28</sup> Jean Stein’s *Edie: An American Biography* present Warhol’s response to Edie’s death as surprisingly disconnected. The words of Bruce Williamson reveal Warhol’s coldness regarding his most important protégée and double:

Brigid told Andy that Edie had suffocated, and Andy asked *when*, not sounding particularly surprised or shaken. But then, that’s Andy. Brigid pointed out to him that Edie hadn’t died of drugs, she had suffocated in her sleep. And Andy asked how she could do a thing like that. Brigid didn’t know. Then Andy asked whether *he* would inherit all the money. (I took the *he* as a reference to Edie’s young husband at the time of Edie’s death.) Brigid said that Edie didn’t have any money. Then, after a pause, Andy continued with something like, Well, what have *you* been doing? Then Brigid started talking about going to the dentist (342).<sup>29</sup>

Even beyond Warhol’s obliviousness to Edie’s demise, the question of who made whom plagues Warhol. Poet René Ricard is especially pointed in *Edie*: “Edie brought Andy out. She turned him on to the real world. He’d been in the demi-monde. He was an *arriviste*. And Edie legitimized him, didn’t she? He never went to those

---

<sup>28</sup> Mary Woronov describes filmmaker, painter and actress Marie Mencken in *Swimming Underground* as being Gerard Malanga’s patron and surrogate mother. Married to the queer filmmaker Willard Maas, she is another of Warhol’s famous zaftig starlets, dominating those around her in the imperious style of Brigid Berlin, Pat Ast and Sylvia Miles. “She looked like my future in forty years; we both had the same big old Slavic cheekbones, and she towered over Willard just like I towered over Gerard. The whole thing was funny and too close for comfort. In spite of the fact that Willard was gay, Gerard said that Marie met him when she was a virgin and never fucked anyone else, and here they were at sixty, drinking and shouting their way through dinner till she passed out” (31). As Woronov’s text indicates, the plot of “The Gerard Malanga Story” relies upon the real-life Malanga/Mencken/Woronov triangle, which it mines and mimes.

<sup>29</sup> When Tennessee Williams dies, Warhol’s response is similar to his Edie reaction. “How could Tennessee Williams choke on a bottlecap, do you think? How could that happen?” he asks, implying that death involves volition (Thursday, March 3, 1983).

parties before she took him. He'd be the first to admit it" (152).<sup>30</sup> Whether or not Warhol's engagement of Edie intensified her drug addiction, her death taints his work with death's odor. Staining Warhol, Edie's barbiturate-infused exit serves as a sign of the dangers he and his art skirt—dangers which survive the 60s, continuing into drug scenes of the 70s and 80s. Henry Geldzhaler, curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Twentieth Century Art and one-time Commissioner of Cultural Affairs for the City of New York, connects Warhol's destruction of Edie with his ruination of *My Hustler* star Paul America: "Paul America was a wasted creature after they had finished with him. They finally washed their hands of him and let him float away. He's a poor burned-out thing living in a commune in Indiana and trying to pull himself together" (*Edie*, 176-177). Like Mr. America, Edie, a veritable Miss America (after all, hers is an "American" biography), cannot pull herself together, leaving the Factory a total mess as she wafts away toward an uncertain horizon.

Emulating the workings of Hollywood, Warhol becomes a center of attraction for New York City's lunatic fringe. Seeking out those people living on a neural precipice, Warhol takes in one fragile ego after another, making matters worse by magically transforming them into superstars and making them feel momentarily gratified. Under such circumstances, withdrawing his attention has the deleterious effect of shattering a bloated ego erected upon an insecure foundation. In the case of

---

<sup>30</sup> In the *Diaries*, Warhol recalls an important fight with Ricard, who remains critical of his work. The drama unfolds at the afterparty of his *Shadows* opening at Dia: "Philippa invited René Ricard—her Dia Foundation just signed him up for benefits as the first poet—so he arrived at 65 Irving and was saying that my work was just 'decorative.' That got me really mad, and I'm so embarrassed, everybody saw the real me. I got so red and was telling him off, and then he was screaming things like that John Fairchild, Jr. was my boyfriend—you know how horrible René is—and it was like one of those old Ondine fights, and everybody was stunned to see me so angry and out of control and screaming back at him" (199). Much of Warhol's anger centers on the fact that Gerard Malanga has just become Ricard's agent.

Edie, her replacement by Ingrid Superstar is the cataclysmic event. Ricard tells a story also relayed by Woronov:

The Warhol people felt Edie was giving them trouble—they were furious with her because she wasn't cooperating. So they went to a Forty-second street bar and found Ingrid von Schefflin. They had noticed: "Doesn't this girl look like an ugly Edie? Let's really teach Edie a lesson. Let's make a movie with her and tell Edie she's the big new star." They cut her hair like Edie's. They made her up like Edie. Her name became Ingrid Superstar...just an invention to make Edie feel horrible (*Edie*, 227).

Excising Edie from *The Chelsea Girls* and replacing her reel with one of Nico crying, Warhol deflates her ego, removing her from the limelight and ending her world-historicity. Holly Woodlawn voices the anxiety experienced by Edie and others—an anxiety based upon the radical instability of Factory celebrity: "Finally, I came to realize the ugly truth behind my popularity. These party people weren't interested in me as a person...I was a conversation piece; a curious bauble on display. I felt used by them because I was a good laugh or something to talk about. I felt like a joke and it hurt" (181). Edie feels like the same species of sight gag. Over cocktails at the Russian Tea Room, Edie confesses her fears in the wake of a proposed Edie Retrospective: "Everybody in New York is laughing at me...I'm too embarrassed to leave my apartment. These movies are making a complete fool of me! Everybody knows I just stand around doing nothing and what kind of talent is that?" (Bockris, 173). Frail creatures, Edie and other Warhol stars suffer the fate of being elevated, then dropped. When Andy ponders, "I wonder if Edie will commit suicide. I hope she lets me know so I can film it," his words come as prophetic. Flopping out in a

swimming pool on her mother's estate, Edie ends her life both miraculating past glamour (she fantasizes about phone conversations with *Vogue* editors) and plunging into a narcotic pit from which there is no return.<sup>31</sup>

Unlike Edie, Jean-Michel Basquiat does much more than stand around vapidly—although Warhol does indicate that his fame is built upon the automatic repetition of a pose, as when, in the *Diaries*, he comments: “Bruno just called—at the Christie’s auction Jean Michel’s painting went for \$20,000. I think he’s going to be the Big Black Painter. It was one of his sort of big paintings. I think Jean-Michel’s early stuff is sort of better, because then he was just painting, and now he has to think about stuff to paint to sell. And how many screaming Negroes can you do? Well, I guess you can do them forever, but...” (Wednesday, October 31, 1984).<sup>32</sup> Through Basquiat, heroin becomes associated with inspiration: “Jean Michel called three or four times, he’d been taking smack. Bruno came by and saw a painting that Jean Michel wasn’t finished with yet, and he said, ‘I want it, I want it,’ and so he gave him money and took it, and I felt funny, because nobody’s done that for me in so long” (Wednesday, October 3, 1984).<sup>33</sup> Letting heroin lead him, Basquiat makes it a crucial part of the productive process: “Jean-Michel was painting back in the images he’d painted out when he was on smack and he came up with some masterpieces”

---

<sup>31</sup> David Weisman’s 1972 film *Ciao! Mahnattan* documents Edie’s last moments. It is a masterpiece of *schadenfreude*.

<sup>32</sup> “Big” is Warhol’s word for Basquiat, as when he remarks “Jean Michel and I went to the back of the plane and he was smoking joints, and then I realized that he’d left his brand-new Comme des Garçons coat in the hotel room when he’d been rolling, and he called an I called but they’ll never send it. He just knows what looks good on him. He’s 6’—or 6’1” with his hair. He’s really big” (*Diaries*, Wednesday, November 7, 1984). Basquiat’s cock is also huge: “He fell asleep and then he got up and he was up front by the phones with a big hard-on, like a baseball bat in his pants” (Thursday, April 12, 1984).

<sup>33</sup> While Jean-Michel’s name is hyphenated, the *Diaries* spell it without the hyphen. Consequently, I have retained the use of “Jean-Michel” throughout, “normalizing” *Diary* spellings for the sake of consistency.

(Sunday, November 4, 1984). Heroin refers to a history of abuse: “He got a hole in his nose and he couldn’t do coke anymore, and he wanted to still be on something, I guess. I guess he wants to be the youngest artist to go” (Wednesday, May 18, 1983). Though Basquiat does not overdose until 1988, his collaboration with Warhol is fueled by his association with heroin; like so many stars intersecting his path, Basquiat is the junkie-of-the moment. Basquiat himself indicates the knowledge-producing capacity of drugs: “He’s not even a drug addict—how can he write a book? About *what?*” asks Basquiat, upon discovering that his father has fancied himself a writer (Thursday, November 27, 1986). The special knowledge provided by the drug experience entices Warhol, causing him to affiliate himself with one junkie after another. Perhaps they *do* know something, after all!

If Liza is the *Diaries* coke star, then Basquiat is their junk star. Saturated with smack, Basquiat becomes their indecent “Big Black” insider, even bigger and blacker than Grace Jones, who also functions as subversive center by virtue of her racial and sexual alterity. With Basquiat, Warhol veers away from earlier, more cavalier attitudes toward drug use, since he seems to wish genuinely that Basquiat would clean up his act: “Jean-Michel called, back from the Ivory Coast. He said they sell meat with four million flies on it—they cut off a piece and just sell it with the flies. He sounded normal, like he was off drugs and missing old times, he wants to do prints together” (Tuesday, October 31, 1986). Linking “on drugs” with not wanting to collaborate, Warhol indicates that heroin had played a role in the emergence of more distant “new times.” After their 1985 joint show at Tony Shafrazi left Basquiat feeling that Warhol had used him to sustain a faltering career as painter, the space

between them multiplied. When *The New York Times* identified Basquiat as Warhol's "mascot," Basquiat receded. In his Sunday, November 24, 1985 diary entry, a jilted Warhol complains, "Jean-Michel hasn't called me in a month, so I guess it's really over," giving credence to ex-girlfriend Paige Powell's assertion that Warhol is Basquiat's lover.<sup>34</sup> In keeping with other famous Warhol addicts, like Sedgwick or the Duchess, amorous overtones permeate their relationship, as when Warhol gives Jean-Michel a Come painting, or when the two swap hair follicles.<sup>35</sup> With Basquiat, Warhol speaks the language of love. Warhol even subjects Basquiat to a symbolic golden shower, producing a *Piss Painting* in his image (*Jean-Michel Basquiat*, 1982). In *Unseen Warhol*, Basquiat's father Gerard describes the painting: "Jean-Michel brought the portrait Andy had painted of him to my house. I said, 'What are all those strange, green dots?' He then told me the story about Andy having people piss on the wet copper paint to get that effect. We laughed about that" (106). Pissing on Basquiat and on his other addicts, Warhol showcases and toys with the drug narrative, whose protagonists influence him for three decades.

Jean-Michel Basquiat is Andy Warhol's last junkie. Closing out a rollicking series beginning with Warhol's earliest amphetamine coterie, Basquiat represents the final installment in the Pop drug narrative. Nodding off, Basquiat's sleeps adumbrate

---

<sup>34</sup> "And Paige and I are fighting. She keeps making these digs about Jean Michel, she said, 'Are you starting up your gay affair again with Jean Michel?' and so I got *my* dig in and said, 'Listen, I wouldn't go to bed with him because he's so dirty, and I can't believe that anyone would. I mean, *you're* the one who had the affair with a dirty, unwashed person" (Sunday, January 11, 1987). As in other entries, Basquiat is connected with filth.

<sup>35</sup> "What happened was I'd given Jean-Michel a Come painting and he had it with him when he and Richard got drunk together, and Jean-Michel didn't have anything to write his phone number on for Richard Gere except this painting of mine, so he wrote it on that and gave the painting to Richard. Then when Richard woke up the next morning he said he saw it and thought it was disgusting and threw it into the fire. I told him it was *my* come but actually is was Victor's" (Sunday, November 13, 1983). Basquiat first gives Warhol his locks on August 31, 1983; Warhol responds by providing Basquiat with one of his wigs on December 19, 1985. Julian Schanbel's *Basquiat* (Miramax, 1996) dramatizes this hair exchange.

his eventual heroin overdose. Both brilliant and braindead, Basquiat becomes the true genius of the late *Diaries*: “Jean-Michel came over to the office to paint but fell asleep on the floor. He looked like a bum lying there. But I woke him up and he did two masterpieces that were great” (Tuesday, October 2, 1984). Within this context, *Sleep* continues to generate shockwaves. Like John Giorno, Basquiat might slip into REM; unlike him, he might never awaken, as history will eventually prove. Mixing a non-miraculating performativity having less to do with the energies and talent of either the A-heads or Les Girlettes with an unpredictable tendency to slip into semiconsciousness at the drop of a hat, Basquiat owns a celebrity which his drug habits do not eclipse, but rather enrich. Literally a product of the street, NYC’s most important second-generation Pop artist dies a death commensurable with the myth of the burnout. Along with Edie, he persists as caveat to drug euphoria. For while Liza and Halston have a blast with cocaine, and while even the Factory A-heads whoop it up skin- and pill-popping, Jean-Michel and Edie are characters in a darker story. That Warhol should have experienced such close and complicated relationships with the pair is not a factor of his status as master exploiter. Rather, his affinity with them is the outgrowth of a deep and abiding infatuation with those individuals who actively seek out the limit situation and throw themselves into it without a care in the world. Terrified of death, Warhol preserves his own precious mortality by letting them toy with their own. Such consumption is toxic—yet heavenly.

## 2.3 Machinehood

I really like to eat alone. I want to start a chain of restaurants for other people who are like me called ANDYMATS—"The Restaurant for the Lonely Person." You get your food and then you take your tray into a booth and watch television (*Philosophy*, 160).

### Robo-Picasso

Machines promise Warhol a perfectly dehumanized world in which anomie and alienation are meaningless problems because human nature itself has become fully mechanized. After all, issues of integration only have semantic value for human beings. Robots, cyborgs and automatons are not known for experiencing existential crises; disaffected, they work without contemplating their respective situations, concentrating their lives into a laser beam of pure performativity. As systems pioneer Silvan Tomkins has demonstrated in his work on affect, the mechanized device is unable to transcend its status as prosthesis because it cannot exhibit any interest in its context. Even a virus demonstrates interest in the world—hence its absorption by the job of transmitting its genetic material to other cells. Without the basic tropism sparked by interest there is no possibility of autonomy—nor is there any chance that affect will erupt into existence, therein compromising the device's ability to perform an assigned task. Orientation cannot take place without the drive to be situated: creatures interested in nothing perish.<sup>1</sup> Mechanisms and gizmos are not able to

---

<sup>1</sup> Arguing for the development of a viable affect mechanism for computers, Tomkins splits drive from affect, revising Freud such that drive and affect are differently motivated, drive lacking (1) the freedom of time, (2) freedom of intensity, (3) freedom of density of investment, (4) freedom of investment in possibility, (5) freedom of object, (6) freedom of membership in sequential central assemblies, (7) freedom to combine with, modulate and suppress other drives, (8) freedom of consummatory site, (9)

generate interest in anything, and are consequently unable to experience being-in-the-world, a quality reserved for higher forms of sentient life: “The automaton must be motivated. It must be equipped with a drive signal system which tells it when it is running out of cards, oil and electricity, and it must be motivated to store energy as it now stores information. It must also be motivated to reproduce itself. Turing, who demonstrated that a self-producing machine was theoretically possible, was a logician, and understandably limited the problem of self-reproduction to asexual techniques; but if we are interested in the problem of human simulation, the race of automata must be perpetuated not only by knowledge but by passion” (Tomkins, 41). Seeking to find the secret to artificial intelligence, Tomkins faults contemporary AI for its inability to infuse the computer with affect. Working laterally to Warhol-as-machine, I arrive at a new understanding of his obliviousness and nonchalance: like any good cyborg, he refuses humanism, even to the point of shirking off the Oedipal yoke so integral to Western notions of individuation.<sup>2</sup>

Warhol’s reports of his own affective states make him sound like an “unintegrated automaton,” or machine which has not as of yet acquired motivation.

---

freedom of instigation, and (10) freedom of substitutability of consummatory objects which affects possess (41). Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s and Adam Frank’s *Shame and Its Sisters: a Silvan Tomkins Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995, 75-80) is my source for all Tomkins references in 2.3.

<sup>2</sup> In her “A Cyborg Manifesto,” Donna J. Haraway identifies the cyborg as radically disaffected, a state she connects with the cyborg’s lack of Oedipalization: “The cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; it has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labour, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts into a higher unity. In a sense, the cyborg has no origin story in the Western sense—a ‘final’ irony since the cyborg is also the awful apocalyptic *telos* of the “West’s” escalating dominations of abstract individuation, an ultimate self untied at last from all dependency, a man in space” (150-151). See *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991). Deleuze and Guattari are the first to ally the refusal of the Oedipal narrative with a revolutionary project; Haraway’s genius is to name the cyborg as anti-Oedipal ideal. See also Haraway’s *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium.FemaleMan<sup>©</sup>\_Meets\_OncoMouse<sup>TM</sup>* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

Wanting nothing, the unintegrated automaton fails at properly orienting itself in spacetime, and never transcends the servo-mechanism for which it was intended. Ever desiring not to desire, Warhol rejects affect in an effort to self-mechanize. Consummate bachelor machine, he produces a variety of sterility as his ultimate product.<sup>3</sup> Making apathy chic, Warhol reflects the disaffection of the Youthquakers while playing up his own physiognomic and corporeal strangeness. *Philosophy* begins with Warhol getting his inhuman look together:

“The bored languor, the wasted pallor...”  
 “The what?”  
 “The chic freakiness, the basically passive  
 astonishment, the enthralling secret knowledge...”  
 “WHAT??”  
 “The chintzy joy, the revelatory tropisms, the  
 chalky, puckish mask, the slightly Slavic look...”  
 “Slightly...”  
 “The childlike, gum-chewing naïveté, the  
 glamour rooted in despair, the self-admiring  
 carelessness, the perfected otherness, the wispieness, the  
 shadowy, voyeuristic, vaguely sinister aura, the pale,  
 soft-spoken magical presence, the skin and bones...”  
 “Hold it, wait a minute. I have to take a pee.”  
 “The albino-chalk skin. Parchmentlike.  
 Reptilian. Almost blue...”  
 “Stop it! I have to pee!”  
 “The knobby knees. The roadmap of scars. The  
 long bony arms, so white they look bleached. The  
 arresting hands. The pinhead eyes. The banana  
 ears...”

---

<sup>3</sup> Regarding the bachelor machine, or *machine celibataire*, see “The Arts of Dying: Celibatory Machines” in Michel de Certeau’s *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). “Having put an end to the *coincidentio oppositorum*, and having washed its hands of any ‘consolation’ overcoming difference, the machine’s essential characteristic is that it is male. It behaves as such at its place of production. It confesses (or flaunts, whichever you like) its relation to its limit, the limit of being masculine and nothing but. The celibate of the machine, in effect, returns to the essential, structuring form of difference—sexuality—and refuses to exercise any masculine power of expressing the feminine in speech [*dire la femme*]” (166). Since de Certeau primarily refers to writing as arena of celibacy, his work on literature as bachelor machine immediately recalls references to Warhol’s *a*: celibate text, it too refuses to *dire la femme*. Pace *POPism* and *Philosophy*, the femme must articulate both text and self (Pat Hackett, Brigid Berlin, even a feminized Colacello).

“The banana ears? Oh, A!!!”

“The graying lips. The shaggy silver-white hair, soft and metallic. The cords of the neck standing out around the big Adam’s apple. It’s all there, B. Nothing is missing. I’m everything my scrapbook says I am”  
(10).

Appearing in the guise of other species, and with a skin made of paper, Warhol has visually left his *Homo sapiens* ancestry behind, having launched off for a robotic, post-human existence. The interior picture comes off as equally bizarre. For Warhol, the ultimate end is the experience of emptiness, as his words of *POPism* indicate: “Most people love watching the same basic thing, as long as the details are different. But I’m just the opposite: if I’m going to sit and watch the same thing I saw the night before, I don’t want it to be essentially the same—I want it to be *exactly* the same. Because the more you look at the same exact thing, the more the meaning goes away, and the better and emptier you feel” (*POPism*, 50). Assimilating to his camera lens, Warhol, like the Bolex or Auricon, can watch an unchanging tableau without blinking. In such a boring and emptying place, the questions Romanticism lays out for art—issues surrounding legitimacy, authenticity, originality, novelty, inspiration and genius—turn to so much gibberish. Parodied, these permeate Warhol’s works, which seek to drain them of semantic value in an effort to maximize nonfeeling and nonsensation. Positing the machine as ideal endpoint, Warhol envies the mechanized entity its ability to enact a production uninterrupted by affect.

Walter Benjamin’s predictions about mechanical reproduction as spirit of an age receive confirmation by Warhol, who envisions a time and place when and where machines can fabricate anything, including those products of human enterprise

thought to be most resistant to technological mediation: works of art and literature. More than any other artist, Warhol bears out the ramifications Benjamin identifies as resulting from the displacement of original by copy in the modern (and postmodern) world. In his essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Benjamin diagnoses the machine-dominated epoch as suffering a loss of aura due to the detachment of objects from tradition. As image separates from object via the logic of infinite reproducibility, a crisis in authenticity makes its presence known: “To pry an object from its shell, to destroy its aura, is the mark of a perception whose ‘sense of the universal equality of things’ has increased to such a degree that it extracts it even from a unique object by means of reproduction. This is manifested in the field of perception what in the theoretical sphere is noticeable in the increasing importance of statistics. The adjustment of reality to the masses and of the masses to reality is a process of unlimited scope, as much for thinking as for perception” (*Illuminations*, 223). Replacing the cult value of an older hand-made art with the exhibition value of machine-fabricated art, the industrial era paradoxically re-invests the human face with a fetishistic quality: “In photography, exhibition value begins to displace cult value all along the line. But cult value does not give way without resistance. It retires into an ultimate retrenchment: the human countenance” (225-226).<sup>4</sup> Warhol embodies this tendency. His own paintings are indebted to the human face, however ironic that cathexis may be. Silkscreening faces onto canvas, Warhol

---

<sup>4</sup> “Works of art are received and valued on different planes. Two polar types stand out: with one, the accent is on the cult value; with the other, on the exhibition value of the work... With the different methods of technical reproduction of a work of art, its fitness for exhibition increased to such an extent that the quantitative shift between its two poles turned into a qualitative transformation of its nature” (225). While the mechanically reproduced work of art initially abnegated the human trace, it ultimately returned to it as obsessive relic. All Benjamin quotes are taken from *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968).

demonstrates the proof of Benjamin's assertion that, in a dehumanized age, the face becomes a fetish. Perhaps seeing the humanoid countenance from the automaton's point of view, Warhol gazes upon it as a relic or trace from a lost order. The face should not be; that it persists generates the same interest displayed by a paleontologist unearthing a fossil. Only a machine could find the human face so atavistically riveting. A cyborg gazing wistfully at a humanoid landscape long since obliterated, Warhol experiences AI's nostalgia for its antiquated creator.

Converting affect into the cold, digitalized language of the computer, Warhol lives out a personal version of Systems Theory. As Habermas discusses in his *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Systems Theory counters Hegelian pan-subjectivity with an all-consuming objectivity: "It [systems functionalism] allows the subjects themselves to degenerate into systems. It tacitly sets a seal on 'the end of the individual,' which Adorno encircled with his negative dialectic and protested against as self-inflicted fate" (353). Losing himself in crude objectivity, Warhol produces a painting, cinema and literature obsessed with the status quo, which entralls him as a result of its sheer being-there. Machines fill his spaces to the point of saturation. Tape recorders, telephone answering machines, Bolex, Auricon, Polaroid and Big Shot cameras, robots and automats: the self-regulating entity becomes an ideal for Warhol, who marvels at its capacity to work without interruption. Machines always bring home the bacon. When they cease doing so, they are junked, and a new bacon-bringer is installed. Half android himself, Warhol envies machines for their ability to maintain a functional homeostasis day in and day out—unlike human beings, machines keep going with a minimum of input, spitting out product without respite.

This technophilic extreme remains a limit for the Romantics and the Surrealists—a threshold nonchalantly crossed by Warhol. Keats' idea of negative capability and Breton's passion for aesthetic automatism receive fresh confirmation by Warhol's work, which refuses insemination while paradoxically never stopping to reproduce.<sup>5</sup> Externalizing the creative process, Warhol redefines negative capability, intensifying the traditional Aeolian harp metaphor such that active contribution approaches zero. Furthermore, he increases the impersonality of automatism, resulting in a creativity of almost total renunciation. The work of art is no longer pseudo-external, but external in its own right. Not merely arising as if created by another, art is actively fabricated by others. Their psyches bubble through the work's perforations, as when Warhol's typists make *a* their own: "Billy Name supervised the typesetting, and made sure that every spelling mistake and typo was left intact so that Andy's intention of making a 'bad' book would be realized" (Bockris, 243). Untouched, the artist's id refuses to reveal itself, languishing safely at a distance (that is, if it even exists).

Making nothing, Warhol offers something after something in the hyperfabrication of a delicious zero-calorie nonsense. Desired objects lurk off-screen, as in the 1963 silent film *Blow Job*, which shows only the face of a felled rebel without ever granting visual access to the act of fellatio itself: "Much in *Blow*

---

<sup>5</sup> Keats defines negative capability in a December 27, 1817 letter to George and Tom Keats: "'I had not a dispute but a disquisition with Dilke, on various subjects; several things dovetailed in my mind, & at once it struck me, what quality went to form a Man of Achievement especially in Literature & which Shakespeare possessed so enormously—I mean *Negative Capability*, that is when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason— Coleridge, for instance, would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the Penetralium of mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half knowledge" (370). In his first *Manifesto of Surrealism*, Breton equates surrealism with automatism: "SURREALISM, *n.* Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express—verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner—the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern" (26). As a "disinterested pay of thought," automatism represents a machine-like productivity. Like Keats' negative capability, it refuses interruption, making writing an externalized practice emanating from without.

*Job* is unverifiable. We don't know whether a man or a woman is fellating the actor. Perhaps several different men or women, perhaps one per reel. We may even wonder whether Warhol himself is servicing his star, while someone else mans his Bolex. Thus we don't know the recipient's sexual preference: he looks like trade (a straight man who, especially if paid, lets another man blow him). We don't know whether he truly reaches climax, or merely fakes it. There is no money shot: evidentiary ejaculation, a porn staple" (Koestenbaum, 84). Similarly, Warhol's attention runs out the moment important events occur, as when, in the 1965 film *Camp*, the camera bleeds into whiteness as black model Donyale Luna works it in a fur coat, or when, in "The Tingle," Warhol takes a urination break during Brigid's discussion of her vibrator.<sup>6</sup> The question of what Warhol makes looms large: what exactly does he offer his audiences in terms of product? Appearing to offer the strange gift of nothingness, Warhol is that queer machine which makes zero-ness a tangible commodity. Whether Warhol paints his paintings, writes his books or films his films doesn't matter—in fact, if we can attribute them to someone else, he glows even brighter. Negating nothing—that is, making nothingness palpable, concrete, "there"—Warhol pulls off the inimitable stunt of making emptiness salable. Glamourizing emptiness, Warhol perfects absence, which persists as a species of presence after it exits his machinery.

---

<sup>6</sup> Dorothy Dean also vaporizes in *My Hustler*. Like Donyale Luna, she brings the film to a close at a moment of maximum interest. While Hilton Als sees the disappearance of the black queen as demonstrating Warhol's disinterest in her, I disagree. In Warhol, what disappears is often of high importance. Though figurative, he alludes to figures outside his lenses and screens. These become the displaced and unvisualizable locus of fulfillment.

## System Toxicity

Machines are closed systems. Complete with a structure, an organization and a motivating source, they continue to generate product until they break down, at which point they can be repaired and set in motion once again. No stranger to the artworld, Warhol the commercial success gleaned the industrial power of the paintings, sculptures and wisdom of Marcel Duchamp, who made the poetics of the machine central to his Cubist and Dada projects.<sup>7</sup> The glamour of the machine as formulated by Marinetti in his *Manifesto of Futurism* achieves new luminescence with Warhol, who removes the destructive properties of machines from the equation, focusing almost exclusively on their productive and reproductive potential (machine make things; machines record things).<sup>8</sup> Even when machines do produce destruction, as in his electric chair and atom bomb images, their power seems to be minimized, subverted: “This ‘modern’ form of legal electrocution impressed Warhol as a typically American way to go...Perversely, he silkscreened the image of lethal furniture against monochrome backgrounds in decorator colors, as in *Lavender*

---

<sup>7</sup> Duchamp is also the basis for the idea of the bachelor machine. His *Large Glass* depicts a bachelor machine attempting to strip bare and penetrate a bride—unsuccessfully, of course. “Michel Carrouges has identified a certain number of fantastic machines—‘celibate machines’—that he has discovered in works of literature. The examples he points to are of many different sorts, and at first glance do not seem to belong to a single category: Marcel Duchamp’s painting ‘La mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même’ (‘The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even’), the machine in Kafka’s ‘In the Penal Colony,’ Raymond Roussel’s machines, those of Jarry’s *Surmâle* (*Supermale*), certain of Edgar Allen Poe’s machines, Villiers’s *Eve future* (*The Future Eve*), etc.” (Deleuze and Guattari, 18). Warhol first met Duchamp at his 1963 Pasadena Art Museum retrospective (Warhol was in LA for the Ferus Gallery’s exhibition of his Elvises). Oddly enough, Duchamp was more enamored of Taylor Mead than of Warhol. Dressed in an oversized knitted sweater and dancing the night away with Patti Oldenburg, Mead was the evening’s star (Watson, 113).

<sup>8</sup> Marinetti fetishes the machine, saturating it with ecstasy: “We say that the world’s magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing car whose hood is adorned with great pipes, like serpents of explosive breath—a roaring car that seems to ride on grapeshot—is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace* (‘Manifesto of Futurism,’ Thesis #6).

*Disaster*” (Bourdon, 154). Overall, machines allude to industrialism, that process by which mechanization was installed in both the West and its colonized territories as culturally determining praxis. Thus Warhol would name his atelier “The Factory,” implying that it could produce almost anything—corrugated cardboard, ball bearings, ketchup. Factory work is impersonal; it refuses any attempt to wash over it with a poetics. Yet on closer examination, the factories central to the industrial revolution itself actually regressed poetry to *poiesis*, or the unqualified act of making. Factories make: they produce on a large scale, serially emitting products from their assembly lines with presumably minimal interruptions. Factories refuse authorship as well—although labor is performed on a large scale, the labor produced involves only anonymity. Communal, these entities merge individualities into the collective worker, that fictive creature whose actions produce merchandise. As demonstrated by Marx, they represent the ultimate degree of alienation—the kicker being that Warhol embraces that aloneness and separation, incorporating it directly into his aesthetic. Finding joy in factory work, especially when others undertake it, Warhol brings a little bit of Pittsburgh to Manhattan: modeling aesthetic production on the activities of the steel mill, he imports its brute reality into the creative act.

From the vantage point of autopoietic theory, a discipline dedicated to describing and analyzing the ways in which systems self-organize, self-regulate and self-propagate, Warhol’s obsession with automatic entities makes even more sense, as it ties to his fixation on relations (how groups aggregate, how individuals respond to larger entities, etc.). Developing as an offshoot of evolutionary biology, the work of Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, foundational to autopoietic and Systems

Theory alike, speaks to Warhol's love of the machine. For Maturana and Varela, systems are defined by their self-regulatory ability, referred to as "recursion." Whether they be a machine, cell or, as in the famous Belousov-Zhabotinsky reaction, molecule, systems are first and foremost "dissipative structures."<sup>9</sup> Through their homeostatic workings, entropy is made to dissipate—as happens to that theoretical precursor to the system, the vortex.<sup>10</sup> Machines (and vortices) are recursive because they fall back on themselves in the homeostatic act. Managed from within, machines require human labor and input only until the moment they are produced, after which they run themselves with minimal external intervention: as such, they are also *heteropoietic*, or produced from without (as Tomkins has commented, no machine can yet self-replicate due mainly to problems in motivation). Organized such that they are able to maintain an essential balance between intake and excretion, anabolism and catabolism, systems remain radically self-reliant. According to these definitions, machines qualify as systems by virtue of their insularity. As productive

---

<sup>9</sup> In their *Looking Glass Universe: The Emerging Science of Wholeness* (New York: Cornerstone Library, 1984), John P. Briggs and F. David Peat discuss this important chemical reaction: "In 1958, two Russian researchers stumbled upon a far-from-equilibrium structure occurring in a chemical environment. When they mixed malonic acid, bromate, and cerium ions in a shallow dish of sulfuric acid at certain critical temperatures, what is now called the Belousov-Zhabotinsky reaction created a structure of concentric and spiral 'cells' that pulsed and remained stable even as the reaction secreted more cells. The reaction is clearly chemical and does not involve DNA, but in its structure it looks like the growth of a life form!" (164). Using an autocatalytic loop, the reaction produces a low-degree autopoiesis, raising serious questions about the nature of life. Since, as Maturana comments, there is no reproductive criterion for autopoiesis, only the stability of a structure over time, the entities produced by Belousov and Zhabotinsky redefine the threshold of existence. My source for Maturana and Varela here and in the text is *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living* (Boston: D Reidel Publishing Company, 1980).

<sup>10</sup> Physicist Ilya Prigogine first theorized the vortex as dissipative structure in the early 80s. His interest is in self-regulating entities, among which the vortex figures most importantly. Emerging as a stable structure in a zone of wild energy fluctuation, the vortex maintains its structural integrity, despite surrounding chaos. Thriving on that chaos, it creates an autocatalytic loop which guarantees its longevity. Briggs and Peat provide a more detailed discussion of Prigogine's work—specifically, its relevance for autopoiesis. Entropy is defined as any system's increase in disorder over time. According to the second law of thermodynamics, all closed systems exhibit increased chaos irreversibly.

entities, they also qualify as *allopoietic* (they create potentially new systems) For Maturana and Varela, allopoiesis contrasts with autopoiesis in terms of what exactly gets produced via automatism. While the autopoietic entity essentially makes only itself, the allopoietic entity acts like an assembly line. Spitting out product into an extra-systemic world, it creates a not-self. Thus for Maturana and Varela even sexual or asexual reproduction qualifies as allopoietic, since the organism generated must necessarily pinch off from its parent to assume a life all its own. Technically speaking, autopoiesis is not marked by reproductive viability: only self need be produced and maintained in order for there to be autopoiesis. Hence through allopoiesis, the self-enclosed autopoietic system creates potentially new systems, which pass into an extra-systemic space where they will be dispersed. Incorporating only bonding and production, the allopoietic device fabricates product in the same way that a crystal branches out, oblivious to problems of regulation or maintenance, bent only on making more.

Inevitable in any discussion of Warhol's relevance for autopoietic theory is his use of the silkscreen—especially given that this particular technology ensured his centrality to Pop art and garnered him instant celebrity (a fame capable of regenerating and recharging itself like Prigogine's vortex). Through this advertising technique, Warhol even produces other silkscreening machines, as when, in *POPism*, he reports teaching the technique to Rauschenberg: "David [Bourdon] went on, 'He was very interested in the silkscreens and asked where you got them. Up to then he'd been transferring images by putting lighter fluid on magazine and newspaper illustrations and then rubbing it onto the paper—a very painstaking process. He was

impressed when he saw that with a silkscreen you could get an image larger than life and use it over and over again” (23). In the *Diaries*, he describes a Mike Bidlo installation at P.S. 1 which might have rolled off a Warhol assembly line: “Rupert came by and told me about the show at P.S. 1 where they created a replica of the old 47<sup>th</sup> Street Factory. They had a silver room and people passing out LSD and an Edie running around” (Monday, April 16, 1984). Transplanting his technique of commercial art into the zone of high art, Warhol causes a commotion: What does it mean that important painting is now generated by machines? Surely some paradigm of humanism has been violated—as well as a principle of organicism.<sup>11</sup> Opting for his half-dead look, Warhol complicates matters by appearing to be only slightly human himself. Hence his perpetual use of the wig, which turned his coiffure into a silver-rinsed cyborg’s mane.<sup>12</sup> Managerial ghoul, Warhol uses the toil of others to create his paintings, which remain the products of his authority despite the fact that he has not authored them in a traditional way. For there are authentic Warhols and

---

<sup>11</sup> Haraway’s cyborg is not a humanist creature, nor is it organic: “Pre-cybernetic machines could be haunted; there was always the spectre of the ghost in the machine. This dualism structured the dialogue between materialism and idealism that was settled by a dialectical progeny, called spirit or history, according to taste. But basically machines were not self-moving, self-designing, autonomous. They could not achieve man’s dream, only mock it. They were not man, an author to himself, but only a caricature of that masculinist reproductive dream. To think they were otherwise was paranoid. Now we are not so sure. Late twentieth-century machines have made thoroughly ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed, and many other distinctions that used to apply to organisms and machines. Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves are frighteningly inert” (*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, 152).

<sup>12</sup> For de Certeau, “wig” or “perruque” has another—yet related—meaning: “Take, for example, what in France is called *la perruque*, ‘the wig.’ *La perruque* is the worker’s own work disguised as work for his employer. It differs from pilfering in that nothing of material value is stolen. It differs from absenteeism in that the worker is officially on the job. *La perruque* may be as simple as a secretary’s writing a love letter on ‘company time’ or as complex as a cabinetmaker’s ‘borrowing’ a lathe to make a piece of furniture for his living room” (*The Practice of Everyday Life*, 25). Diverting time, the wig-gels with Debord’s idea of *détournement*, as described by Len Bracken in *Guy Debord: Revolutionary* (Venice, CA: Feral House, 1997): “Debord rediscovered and amplified Lautreamont’s method of *détournement* (diverting an existing phrase by changing or adding a few choice words), using texts by Hegel, Freud, the civil code, science fiction novels as well as comics and films. The exciting hubris of these appropriations elicited charges of megalomania, which Debord and his cohorts shamelessly accepted with equal arrogance” (42).

inauthentic Warhols. The *Diaries* is quite clear on this point, especially when Warhol expresses displeasure toward ex-assistant Gerard Malanga, who uses Warhol's electric chair silkscreens to create his own fakes: "Julian Schnabel came by with his little girl. We're talking about maybe doing some different image on top of a fake or mine that he bought—one of those paintings I think Gerard Malanga did. Julian didn't know it was a fake when he bought it" (Friday, November 14, 1986). Warhol encounters his own fakes in an exhibit: "And then we went to Mary Garage. What's the name of that gallery? Gracie Mansion. On Avenue A. And there were five fakes of mine. Electric Chairs. And some Jackson Pollock fakes. I didn't say anything" (*Diaries*, Saturday, January 28, 1984). In addition, not only Warhol's art is fakeable: Warhol himself can be cloned quite efficiently, at least in the popular imagination. At a Prom Night Party for Neil Bogart, Warhol's authenticity is challenged by a reporter, causing him joy: "She said she was a second-string reporter at *Stern* and they didn't get her the *real* Andy Warhol to interview, they got her the double, and what was she doing in such a second-rate position, and somehow he believed her, he just got right up and left, and he wouldn't talk to me for the rest of the night. He thought I was a fake Andy Warhol. Isn't that great?" (*Diaries*, Wednesday, May 6, 1981).<sup>13</sup>

Claiming to be a machine, Warhol places himself in the precarious position of having to defend his originality in the face of non-Warhol Warhols. Catching a glimpse of Warhol encountering his faked paintings and personae, we experience a precious

---

<sup>13</sup> In 1967, Warhol sent out impostor Allen Midgette onto the college lecture circuit; he is Warhol's most famous fake. "The faux Andy Warhol lectured at four western campuses during a week in October, and both Morrissey and Midgette felt the anxiety of pulling off the hoax. Paul Morrissey recalled arriving in Salt Lake City, where the wind from the airplane propellers blew powder from Midgette's hair, and Midgette recalled moving his head and chewing gum to divert attention from his face. But Midgette got away with it until, a few months later, the hoax was discovered" (Watson, 349).

humor—for while many artists find their work cloned, only Warhol has made the stakes so high regarding the authenticity of even “authentic” Warhols.

Self-enclosed yet prolific, Warhol himself epitomizes the best of both worlds:

autopoietic, he obsesses over his relationality and catalysis; allopoietic, he imports the assembly line into the world of *kunst*. Letting his gaze alight upon those machines which both maintain themselves and create an ontologically distinct product, he turns the problem of exchange into a question of maintenance. In this context, entropy is an integral concept. As John P. Briggs and F. David Peat comment in *Looking Glass Universe: The Emerging Science of Wholeness*, the question of entropy is intimately connected with the problem of the perpetual motion machine (Warhol’s dream):

“Scientists discovered that this barrier to the free exchange of energy was the key to why perpetual motion machines are impossible...the new science of thermodynamics showed engineers that in each cycle alone some of the energy would be converted into an unusable form and, without an independent input of power, the machine would quickly run down. Thermodynamics related this problem of the running down of all machines to ‘the law of increasing entropy’” (155). Desiring to be in perpetual motion, Warhol wishes to maximize his efficiency by using everything, omitting nothing.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the leftover tantalizes him with its possibilities, challenging his frugality with the prospect of waste. Whether the leftover is a remnant of his art

---

<sup>14</sup> One crucial parallel between capitalism and totalitarianism is that each exhibits a tendency toward perpetual motion. Hence phenomena like Trotsky’s idea of permanent revolution, Hitler’s “constant radicalization of the principle of racial selection,” or Stalin’s supernumerary purges kept totalitarianism in motion, preventing any stabilities from forming (391). Warhol’s love of perpetual motion figures into this context, since, for example, through social gradients and minefields at his Factory, he too kept his art in play. Working to achieve a non-equilibrium situation, he created a fragile order whose survival depended for a large part on movement. I mention this state of affairs only as a way of exploring the complicated relationship between totalitarianism and capitalism, both of which seem to share certain constitutive traits.

(the out-take, the junked print) or of some other productive system (camp taste), it represents a quantum of potential energy which, from a utilitarian perspective, must not be overlooked:

I'm not saying that popular taste is bad so that what's left over from the bad taste is good: I'm saying that what's left over is probably bad, but if you can take it and make it good or at least interesting, then you're not wasting as much as you would otherwise. You're recycling work and you're recycling people, and you're running your business as a by-product of other businesses. Of other *directly competitive* businesses, as a matter of fact. So that's a very economical operating procedure. It's also the funniest operating procedure because, as I said, leftovers are inherently funny (*Philosophy*, 93).

Refusing to succumb to entropy, Warhol's motto is to put each and every leftover to use—a sort of casserole mentality possibly rooted in Depression-era, immigrant poverty and displaced to the sphere of art. For Warhol, there are leftover questions: “So then he [Steve Aronson] said he just interviewed Roy Cohn and that he was going to ask him, ‘Aren't you a big fag?’ but then he ended up liking him and he didn't, so he still had the leftover question and he asked me if *I'd* like to admit that *I* was” (*Diaries*, Wednesday, July 15, 1981). Workers are also leftovers, as Warhol comments with respect to *a*'s typists: “I would glance over at them sometimes with admiration because they had me convinced that typing was one of the slowest, most painstaking jobs in the world. Now I realize that what I had were leftover typists, but I didn't know it then” (*Philosophy*, 95). Excised from the work of art proper—or an interrogative order, or the workforce—the leftover constitutes a productive

supplement. Like the mighty atom, it demonstrates the power of the miniscule, the force of the infinitesimal.

Fighting entropy on a personal level, Warhol the artist worked hard to survive the sixties, which threatened to subsume him under a limiting Pop stereotype. Recycling his traditional imagery in series like his Reversal Series and Retrospectives (1979), Warhol responds to his sixties fame by treating it, too, as an object which might be run through the homogenizing silkscreen process—only in this instance the silkscreen itself is being silkscreened, and fame is being made famous. Forever affiliating himself with young blood, Warhol literalizes the nickname “Drella” by his coercion of “the kids”—creatures who might be film stars (Joe Dallesandro), pop stars (Grace Jones), art stars (Kenny Scharf), or street-smart freaks (Victor Hugo). Opposed to the more respectable members of the ruling class, they entrance Warhol, even in the midst of high-society mavens and pundits: “The Herreras were back from the royal wedding and they invited me to dinner with Jerry Zipkin and said they’d call at 6:00. I said I’d go but I knew I’d cancel because I’m so tired of elegant people, I just wanted to be with some kids” (*Diaries*, Tuesday, August 4, 1981). Through association with younger generations, Warhol rejuvenates his own art, which finds its gears lubricated by the freshness of youth. Desiring even to incorporate his most terrible moments into his aesthetic legacy, Warhol muses about exhibiting his failures: “I still want to do the ‘Worst of Warhol,’ all the stuff that didn’t come off. I’ll (*laughs*) have to do more, though” (*Diaries*, Friday, January 16, 1987). In this context, Warhol’s laughter resonates and ripples. Truly, his failures have all been successes—attempting to fail, he could only succeed (such is the paradigm of the

professional loser, as formulated by Quentin Crisp in books like *How to Have a Life-Style*, *The Naked Civil Servant*, or *Resident Alien*).<sup>15</sup> Ultimately, Warhol's work is "bad," to divert the title of his final film—and this badness sells. The Warhol machine runs on this badness, which guarantees that even its most malformed products will be successes in their own right. Celibate yet promiscuous, he packages failure for a hungry throng eager to consume and to embody his offness. The proposed name for his TV show, *Nothing Special*, is decidedly honest, revealing Warhol's commitment to zeroes. For he, too, is nothing special—yet in his unspecialness, he has miraculously managed to fathom the delirious heights of celebrity.

Allopoietically, Warhol's commitment to the assembly line alludes to a Fordist order which, in Mandel's rubric, qualifies as pre-postmodern, or middle-capitalist (it occupies the imperialist slot). Poised at the end of an era—that moment just before the onset of Daniel Bell's post-industrial society—Warhol demonstrates a nostalgic attachment to the model of factory production (in Bell's theory, production gives way to information-management).<sup>16</sup> Throughout his career, Warhol never tires of the assembly line, which for him ensures maximum productivity as well as

---

<sup>15</sup> Quentin Crisp's *How to Become a Virgin* (London: Flamingo, 1996) begins: "I am not a drop-out; I was never in" (7). Setting himself up as a professional failure, Crisp never hesitated to dismiss himself as unglamorous—this dismissal setting himself up as paradigmatically glamorous. Like Warhol, Crisp comprehends that if one sets oneself up as a loser, and then succeeds, he has lost at losing; if he succeeds at failing, he fails, which is what he expected to do, anyway. Hence for the professional loser, losing at losing has the pleasant byproduct of incurring fame. See Crisp's *How to Have a Life-Style* (Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 1997) for additional descriptions of Crisp and the loser-winner paradox.

<sup>16</sup> In his *Postmodern Cartographies: The Geographical Imagination in Contemporary American Culture* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), Brian Jarvis explains Bell's idea of a post-industrial society. According to Bell's mapping, "America's economic landscapes are no longer under the shadow of reifying technologies and the Fordist production of goods, rather, they are the site of disalienating services, of interpersonal contact and the circulation of information. As the evanescent factoryscapes of industrial capital fade from view, individuals' primary geographical experiences are of office spaces, university campuses, places of recreation and aesthetic activity" (16).

incessant collaboration and multiple authorship—and, *de rigueur*, an energizing source of interpersonal conflict. Alluding to the Fordist staple the division of labor, the silkscreen embodies the very order subverted by Marx—that efficient scenario in which work is parceled out into a finite number of sub-jobs, therein draining the joy from production and inciting alienation. Even books are produced according to the assembly-line’s logic, as detailed by Colacello, one of *Philosophy*’s ghostwriters:

When I finished the chapter, I handed it to Andy. He counted the pages, as he counted the ads in *Interview*, and said, “Only twelve?” He took it home that night and read it over the phone to Brigid Berlin, taping her reaction. Then he gave the tape to Pat Hackett, telling her to “make it better.” So now the ghostwriter had a ghostwriter, Factory-style. A literary assembly line was set up: Bob to Andy to Brigid to Pat to Andy to HBJ [Harcourt Brace Jovanovich], with a quick stop at Fred’s desk, to make sure we didn’t put in anything “funny” about Lee Radziwill or Jackie Onassis (208).

Other literary assembly lines follow. Developing a potential book on film star Paulette Goddard—*HER*—Warhol sets up another productive flow: “A friend of Fred’s, Christopher Hemphill, a young scribe from an old family, was hired to redact those tapes. Paulette to Andy-and-Bob to Chris to Fred for the Lee-and-Jackie check to Andy-and Bob to HBJ” (208).<sup>17</sup> Adding fuel to the fire, Warhol ensures that his assembly-line operators are never secure enough to claim authorship (Malanga never achieves this, while Hackett’s is only partial and Colacello’s does not arrive until

---

<sup>17</sup> Perhaps a “Worst of Warhol,” Paulette Godard’s book never reaches completion. Like Warhol’s other books, *HER* involved the taping-and-transcribing method. According to Colacello, Godard loses interest, and Harcourt Brace rejects two manuscripts. By then, the book title had changed from *HER* to *Her, Him and Them* after Harcourt Brace had discovered a porno titled *Her*. True to form, Warhol blamed his ghostwriter for the book’s failure: “‘It’s all Paulette’s fault,’ Andy said, because she never really talked. And that’s *your* fault, Bob, because you didn’t pay the price” (290).

Warhol has died). When Pat boldly requests either more money or more credit, Warhol gives her the Solanas treatment: “‘Pat’s freaking out,’ he moaned, scurrying out of the cubicle they shared. You’ve got to do something, Bob. Pat’s going crazy.’ It was Andy’s standard last recourse, and just in case I missed the implication, he added, ‘I don’t know what she might do’” (208).<sup>18</sup> Manning his literary mechanism with skilled laborers too demoralized to refuse him anything, Warhol embodies capitalist allopoiesis, or the production of potentially self-sustaining entities by a self-sustaining entity, in perhaps its purest form.

After Warhol’s death in 1987, fashion designer Stephen Sprouse exhibited the most apropos reaction: “‘Who will we do things for now?’” (Colacello, 495). Sprouse’s statement rings true, since Warhol’s mystery is that he is able to entice others to do his work for him. While these significant others achieve a sort of proletarian glamour all their own, they of course never accede to authorship in the way that Warhol does. Warholian allopoiesis mystifies. That disgruntled employees like Colacello or Malanga would continue to make his art despite grave misgivings marks Warhol as a master manipulator and cultural pimp (even at his September 14, 1985 joint show with Basquiat at Tony Shafrazi, Malanga, by then long alienated from Warhol, asks for an autograph). Running his engine on the egos of these sub-creators, he taps into the perpetual energy source of intrapsychic instability. Recycling cultural leftovers—drag queens, junkies or political crackpots, like Valerie

---

<sup>18</sup> Holly Woodlawn recalls a personal example of “going Solanas” in *A Low Life in High Heels*. When Warhol refuses to grant her an audience, she turns to her drag friend Estelle for help: “Then Estelle turned to me and said, ‘Hey, listen, Jackie showed me where the powerbox is in the basement. If they’re going to fuck with you, let’s fuck with them’” (163). Cutting off Warhol’s power supply, she next climbs the fire escape to personally harass Warhol: “‘It’s Valerie!’ I screamed, banging on the windows with my fists. ‘I’m back and I know you’re in there. I’m gonna getcha—and your little dog, too!’” (163).

Solanas—he sets these otherwise overlooked energy sources in motion. Encouraging wackos to perform for the glaring lens of his camera, he set his stars up for true failure (as opposed to his pseudo-failure). In her introduction to the *Diaries*, Hackett comments on Warhol’s diminution of her role in the ominous project. Referring to Hackett’s work as her “five-minutes-a-day job,” Warhol elides the fact that Hackett expended many kilocalories of daily energy recording, redacting and transcribing Warhol’s notes and observations about his social and business lives (xix). With Colacello, Warhol displays a mixture of overt hostility and sexual puerility. Peppering their conversations about *Philosophy* with lines like “Oh, Bob, I’m soooo hot for your cock,” “Why don’t you shove it up your agent—then she’ll really work for you?” and “Well, you can dance fast, you can come fast, you can whip off pages fast...,” Warhol torments Colacello, living up to his reputation as a “holy terror” (Colacello, 185). In such a system, volatility is bound to erupt. Solanas’ shooting of Warhol is the most famous example of Factory volatility, but others exist—as when, for example, in 1964, Sammy the Italian, one of Ondine’s friends, forces Paul Morrissey to play Russian roulette, shoots a blank, then forces Warhol to wear a plastic rain bonnet and threatens to take him hostage, or when, also in 1964, Dorothy Podber waltzes into the Factory and shoots a bullet through a stack of Marilyns (Bockris, 213). Perfecting the autocatalytic loop, Warhol ensures the permanence of his vorticality while offering a nearly continuous product flow. Harnessing the volatility generated by social friction, he fabricates a startling personal and aesthetic stability in the midst of wild energy fluctuations.

## The World Text as External Time Consciousness

Although Warhol does become a producing and self-regulating machine, he is, mechanistically speaking, best described as being a recording machine. Wishing to capture Merleau-Ponty's "prose of the world" on tape, on film, in print, and in action, he lives out one of the most important functions of Deleuze's and Guattari's CSO: the registering of everything on his surface.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, I will make a slight detour through their work in order to arrive at a deeper comprehension of Warhol's desire to find himself totally subsumed by mimesis. Given that *Anti-Oedipus'* project is an analysis of capitalism's psychological ramifications, I can imagine no better place to aim their quiver of arrows than at Warhol's capitalist practice; recording capitalism as lived experience, Warhol presents himself as an ideal target. Andy Warhol is an exemplary CSO. His oscillation between desire and anhedonia, his separateness from and openness to intersubjective experience: these propulsions mark him as schizoid (and, hence, healthy). For Deleuze and Guattari, the CSO starts out its life as a counterflow: it knows only itself, and makes no provision for the existence of others. This autistic CSO finally achieves the manic illusion of plenitude through the act of recording—the central feat Warhol used to define his existence as human being, artist and automaton. In Deleuze and Guattari's schema, the antiproduative, nuclear, self-enclosed CSO finds itself repulsed by desire ("desiring-production"), making itself impermeable to its machinations for the sole purpose of survival ("eyes closed tight,

---

<sup>19</sup> See Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *The Prose of the World* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

nostrils pinched shut, ears stopped up,” 37-38). Since desire presupposes an openness which would destroy the CSO’s insularity, the CSO resists desire with all its might, plugging its orifices against any intrusion.

Finally giving way to desire, the CSO with its “production of production” (defined here as an antiproduction—for example, the creation of an unconscious or id) morphs into a miraculating machine on whose skin the “production of recording” is effected (the autistic CSO now gravitates toward the desiring-machine, which adheres to its surface as an appended body of organs likened by Deleuze and Guattari to a fencer’s padded suit). In Deleuze’s and Guattari’s words, “The body without organs, the unproductive, the unconsumable, serves as a surface for the recording of the entire process of production of desire, so that the desiring-machines seem to emanate from it in the apparent objective movement that establishes a relationship between the machines and the body without organs” (11). Through the process of recording, a recursive subject inadvertently materializes—a subject which will undertake the endless work of consumption without respite:

Conforming to the meaning of the word “process,” recording falls back on (*se rebat sur*) production, but the production of recording itself is produced by the production of production. Similarly, recording is followed by consumption, but the production of consumption is produced in and through the production of recording. This is because something on the order of a *subject* can be discerned on the recording surface. It is a strange subject, however, with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs, but always remaining peripheral to the desiring-machines, being defined by the share of the product it takes for itself, garnering here, there, and everywhere a reward in the form of a becoming or an avatar, being born of the

states that it consumes and being reborn with each new state (16).

In this morphological plan, a portion of the energy of recording, or “Numen,” is transformed into an energy of consummation/consumption, or “Voluptas.”<sup>20</sup>

Replacing self-enclosure with solar expansion, the CSO now becomes the whole of the world (its narcissism moves from primary to secondary).<sup>21</sup>

Voluptuous, consumption takes place when the paranoid CSO has converted itself into a megalomaniacal CSO. Virtual, the wandering subject produced as an after-effect of the CSO’s attraction to desiring-production now experiences an intense enjoyment. Thunderstruck at the miracle of its existence, the full CSO revels in its own magic: “Desiring-production forms a binary-linear system. The full body is introduced as a third term in the series, without destroying, however, the essential binary-linear nature of this series: 2, 1, 2, 1” (14). Never closing up into the charmed space of the polygon, the CSO and its requisite series refuse the triangulation which defines Oedipalization: “The series is completely refractory to a transcription that would transform and mold it into a specifically ternary and triangular schema such as Oedipus. The full body without organs is produced as antiproduction, that is to say it intervenes within the process as such for the sole purpose of rejecting any attempt to impose on it any sort of triangulation, implying that it was produced by parents” (15). The full body—really a CSO which has forgotten that it is a CSO—entertains the

---

<sup>20</sup> In terms of my earlier discussion of entropy, I am tempted to ask *Anti-Oedipus* what happens to the quanta of energy lost as the CSO passes from recording to consumption. As Numen is converted into Voluptas, some quantity drops out of the equation, dissipated into the environment as an unuseful, wasted by-product. Where this energy goes remains to be theorized.

<sup>21</sup> For the distinction between primary and secondary narcissism, see Freud’s *On Narcissism: An Introduction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991). My contention is that while the closed-off, stopped-up, originary CSO experiences a primary investment in itself as pleasurable object, only the king-sized, expanded final CSO takes its own self-pleasure as a form of love.

fantasy that it has engendered itself, emerging into history as a “glorious organism” in which the subject autoerotically loses itself. Deleuze and Guattari theorize this third machine, the full body, as being fundamentally celibate: “A genuine consummation is achieved by the new machine, a pleasure that can rightly be called autoerotic, or rather automatic: the nuptial celebration of a new alliance, a new birth, a radiant ecstasy, as though the eroticism of the machine liberated other unlimited forces” (18). Lost in the “solar force” of its sudden density, the full body sensually devours the “intensive qualities” unleashed by the act of energy-transformation (*Numen* → *Voluptas*) (18).<sup>22</sup> In this system, the activity of recording counts as an act of *prélèvement* by which a quantity is extracted from a whole and a partial object (Melanie Klein’s term) is introduced. Sampling a portion of a material flow, or *hylè*, *prélèvement* slices into various ontological streams: “It functions like a ham-slicing machine, removing portions from the associative flow: the anus and the flow of shit it cuts off, for instance; the mouth that cuts off not only the flow of milk but also the flow of air and sound; the penis that interrupts not only the flow of urine but also the flow of sperm” (36). All in all, three respective detachments define subjectivity: (1) the CSO’s libidinal slicing-off of associative flows (*prélèvement*), (2) the recording device’s manipulation of Numen (*détachement*) and (3) the full body’s voluptuous residual break, or *coupure-reste*, with desire in the production of its virtual existence.

---

<sup>22</sup> In Deleuze’s and Guattari’s estimation, the autoeroticism of the celibate machine ties to the self-love of the literary machine. Citing Maurice Blanchot, they identify a plan for literacy celibacy: “Maurice Blanchot has found a way to pose the problem in the most rigorous terms, as the level of the literary machine: how to produce, how to think about fragments whose sole relationship is sheer difference—fragments that are related to one another only in that each of them is different—without having recourse either to any sort of original totality (not even one that has been lost), or to a subsequent totality that may not yet have come about?” (42).

For Deleuze and Guattari, the act of recording produces delirium. In their layout for a “materialist psychiatry” (a psychiatry of the schizoid), they ground their new praxis in the fact of sensual excess: “Delirium is in fact characteristic of the recording that is made of the process of production of the desiring-machines; and though there are syntheses and disorders (*affections*) that are peculiar to this recording process, as we see in paranoia and even in the paranoid forms of schizophrenia, it does not constitute an autonomous sphere, for it depends on the functioning and the breakdowns of desiring-machines” (22). Intoxicated by its joyous mimesis, the CSO brings its being into concreteness through the act of inscription. Queer species that this writing is, it makes the CSO’s undifferentiated surface a screen on which the world is not passively represented, but actively reproduced. Oddly enough, the work of recording does not produce memory. Radically “decoded,” the capitalist system institutes an axiomatic approach to organizing and regulating difference; this decoding causes amnesia to corrode the human mind.<sup>23</sup> Through this axiomatic approach, recording culminates in an intoxicating effulgence so immediate that there is no possibility of a past: “There results, finally, a fourth characteristic that places the axiomatic in opposition to codes. The axiomatic does not need to write in bare flesh, to mark bodies and organs, nor does it need to fashion a memory for man. In contrast

---

<sup>23</sup> While codes are fundamentally “indirect, qualitative, and limited,” axioms are direct, quantitative and unlimited. Axiomatic, capitalism makes money “a general equivalent” that is “indifferent to the nature of the flows” (248). Through it, one flow subordinates another. Never exhausted, the axiomatic continually generates an immanent more. Deleuze and Guattari’s model for their axiomatics is the work of mathematics’ Bourbaki group: “Nicolas Bourbaki is the pseudonym of a group of French mathematicians who are known for their work in the theory of sets and for their advocacy of an ‘axiomatic method’ which ‘allows us, when we are concerned with complex mathematical objects, to separate their properties and regroup them around a small number of concepts: that is to say, using a word which will receive a precise definition later, to classify them according to the *structures* to which they belong’ ... In this way they propose to elaborate a language of mathematical formalization capable of integrating the different branches of mathematics” (251). Their reference is to Bourbaki’s *Elements of Mathematics, Vol. 3: Theory of Sets* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1968).

to codes, the axiomatic finds in its different aspects its own organs of execution, perception, and memorization. Memory has become a bad thing” (250). Along with the disappearance of memory comes the eradication of belief; no longer signifying something credible, language becomes radically pragmatic, indicating only “what is going to be done” (250) or what has been done. Substituting the ITC of Husserl for an ETC, or external time consciousness, language performs the work of memory through the recording of transpired actions. Not able to recall anything itself, the CSO as total body locates memory in the world text it inscribes on its undifferentiated surface. No longer personal and internal, memory radiates outward, finding itself fetishized in the ETC.

After a close survey of the entire Warhol opus, I can only move laterally to Deleuze and Guattari’s analysis of the schizophrenic workings of capitalism: truly, Warhol does prove many of their theorems and prognostications, while in return they provide Warhol’s complicated mania to record the world text uninterrupted with a cultural *modus operandi*. I define the world text as all that transpires within intercorporeal space: the motions of bodies as they navigate social and biological gradients, the miniscule movements, stases and eruptions of the globe’s inhabitants as they trace out what physicists refer to as a “world-sheet.”<sup>24</sup> Through books like *a*, *POPism* and the *Diaries*, and through almost all products of his cinema and painting,

---

<sup>24</sup> Brian Greene describes a world-sheet in his *Elegant Universe*: “...[I]magine that we view the interaction between two strings with a camera whose shutter is kept open so that the whole history of the process is captured on one piece of film. We show the result—known as a *string world-sheet*—in Figure 6.7c. By ‘slicing’ the world-sheet into parallel pieces—much as one slices a loaf of bread—the moment-by-moment history of the string interaction can be recorded” (161). Furthermore, the world-sheet prevents tears from interrupting the continuity of spacetime. In catastrophe theory, the world-sheet insulates the universe from such dangers: using the technique of Feynman sums (adding up all possible trajectories a string may undertake), Greene proves that the world-sheet’s movements, actual and possible, produce “a shield that cancels the potentially cataclysmic effects associated with a tear in the fabric of space” (279).

Warhol pushes the act of recording to its ultimate limit (total ennui). De-slicing the proverbial ham, he reverses *prélèvement* to the effect that an impossible whole is (nearly) returned to. The ambivalence of the CSO, which engages desire at the same time that it flees it, pops up continually in Warhol's work—as demonstrated by his alternating paranoia and rapture with regard to matter.<sup>25</sup> Even beyond the foundational flip-flopping between acquisition and evisceration, hoarding and dispersing, there is another key contradiction: the anxieties surrounding the amassing of material things do not surround his accumulation of recorded things. The massiveness of the *Diaries*, for example, causes Warhol no discomfort, while the merciless flows of *a* bother only Ondine, and exclusively in the rare intrusion of a biological urge: “O—(*indistinct*) D—Huh? *Ding ding ding* O—I thought I was being stuck in the can...um spah/hah-uh um rrr Oh, Yeah, knocked out...I hadta go to the bathroom so much, dropped out on this side an go??? D—Nooo, don't go O—But I have to D—Nooo: you can wait a little while O—Owh, but I have to P—Bring your tape recorder CRASH (*glass breaking*)” (425). For Deleuze and Guattari, production is distinct from acquisition, the former inspiring creative rapture, the latter causing only privation: “The deliberate creation of lack as a function of market economy is the art of a dominant class. This involves deliberately organizing wants and needs (*manque*) amid an abundance of production; making all of desire teeter and fall victim to the great fear of not having one's needs satisfied; and making the object

---

<sup>25</sup> According to Deleuze and Guattari, the antiproduktive CSO never disappears; rather, the closed and open CSO generate an alternating current. “The genesis of the machine lies precisely here: in the opposition of the process of production of the desiring-machines and the nonproductive stasis of the body without organs” (9). From this gradient of flows emerges the schizoid: “What we are really trying to say is that capitalism, through its process of production, produces an awesome schizophrenic accumulation of energy or charge, against which it brings all its vast powers of repression to bear, but which nonetheless continues to act as capitalism's limit” (34).

dependent upon a real production that is supposedly exterior to desire (the demands of rationality), while at the same time the production of desire is categorized as fantasy and nothing but fantasy” (28). Falsely substituting acquisition for production, capitalism fabricates as its least usable commodity the schizophrenic: “Our society produces schizos the same way it produces Prell shampoo or Ford cars, the only difference being that the schizos are not salable” (245). Making these schizos salable, Warhol records their world-sheets with precision, accumulating the reports of their trajectories without any qualm whatsoever as to excessiveness of materiality. Making his own schizoid experience a hot commodity, he packages and distributes his weirdness, too. Experiencing the anxiety of parataxis in the sphere of economics but not aesthetics, Warhol shamelessly compiles an exhaustive record of the 60s, 70s and 80s through the process of taping-and-transcription (even in the case of ghostwritten materials, like *Philosophy*). Perpetual voyeur, he gazes robotically at all that transpires in the vortices around him.

Fearful of missing out on even the most banal moments of other people’s lives, Warhol sets in motion a perpetual motion machine designed to get everything down on paper, canvas or celluloid. Even the return of figuration brought about by his version of Pop can be read in this way: namely, as a strategy for recording the existence and behavior of bodies, most, but not all, of them human (the lives of aluminum cans and cows must also be recorded). Things fill Warhol’s imagination, compelling him to dedicate so much of his life to representing their oscillations. Although the world text is not meant to be consumed, Warhol’s supreme text tempts his audience with the prospect of doing so. Offering an “All You Can Eat” deal, they

lure the young and brave to undertake an obscene act of consumption. Getting people to watch the entirety of an unwieldy film like \*\*\*\* (1966-1967), Warhol sets a new limit on human perception: “\*\*\*\* was shown in its twenty-five-hour-long version only once, at the New Cinema Playhouse on West 41<sup>st</sup> Street on December 15, 1967. The screening started at 8:30 p.m. and ended at 9:30 p.m. the following evening. Some spectators drifted in and out, took naps in the lobby, or fell asleep in their seats. The theaters manager claimed that about one-third of the patrons who had shown up for the start of the film were present by midafternoon on the second day. About twenty people stuck it out to the very end” (Bourdon, 265). Recording the world text, Warhol recasts the visual arts, cinema and literature as phenomenological challenge. Who are these twenty people who have such stamina that they can consume a 25-hour film?<sup>26</sup> As Koch has pointed out with respect to *Empire*, perhaps these products are made only for the machine’s (or automaton’s) gaze. The totalities which interest Warhol are entirely fictive, yet offer up an approximate whole tailor-made for the hard-core consuming machine. Basing his own subjectivity on the act of recording, Warhol makes technical prostheses his own battery of appended organs. Little can escape their machinations. Rare *Diary* moments when Warhol’s devices are turned off by other authority figures produce sporadic holes in his world-textuality, as when, in an interview with Rudolph Nureyev, things go haywire:

---

<sup>26</sup> The only queer analogue which rivals Warhol’s films for their challenges to stamina and longevity is the circuit party. Though I cannot flesh out this argument here, my idea is that, like Warhol’s monster films, the circuit party places strange demands on attention; like those 20 “kids” who survived \*\*\*\*, the few brave souls who make it to the end of the circuit event also achieve a sort of celebrity based purely on their ability to consume the unconsumable. On this count, see Michelangelo Signorile’s *Life Outside: The Signorile Report on Gay Men: Sex, Drugs, Muscles, and the Passages of Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997)—specifically the chapter “The Evangelical Church of the Circuit” (75-132).

In the long taxi ride from the Factory to Lincoln Center, Andy didn't say a single word because he was furious that Robert [Mapplethorpe] was carrying a Polaroid Big Shot camera, just as he was. Robert fought silence with silence, while I chattered on brightly like a Washington socialite seated between the ambassadors of Iran and Iraq. When Nureyev entered the fray it was more than I could handle; I just stood in the wings taking notes for *Interview* and my diary. The battle royal started like this:

WARHOL: What color are your eyes?  
NUREYEV: The interview is canceled.

To make sure that his edict was obeyed, Nureyev pressed the off switch of Andy's Sony (Colacello, 108).

Warhol isn't turned off so often; his anger and pain at being refused the right to record mark loaded moments when a different Andy emerges. While attending an International Center of Photography benefit for Jackie Onassis, Warhol suffers the humiliation of not being permitted to photograph his icon: "So here we were in this room where we didn't even *recognize* anybody except each other and this girl comes over to me and says, 'I know you have a camera, and you can take pictures of everyone here except Mrs. Onassis'... When we walked into this room there were 4,000 photographers taking pictures of Jackie. And that horrible girl had come over to tell me *I couldn't!*" (Wednesday, November 9, 1977). When separated from his prostheses, Warhol falls back into autism, for without them his very subjectivity dissolves.

The world-text is Warhol's most substantial contribution to the history of art.<sup>27</sup> Technically speaking, it should not exist. *A* and the *Diaries* are obscene

---

<sup>27</sup> Another candidate for the producer of a world text would be de Sade, for whom even the rauchiest sex act eventually turns into narrative. For this reason, Roland Barthes, in *Sade/Fourier/Loyola*

entities. Filled to saturation with the residues of lives, they arrest a social flow only minimally. Promiscuous, they offer a bloated, engorged and unconsumable textual (and social) body. Part documentary, part anthropological travelogue (“This is how people are doing things in New York City,” these books whisper), Warhol’s unmanageable books frustrate both reading and interpretation. Their lexicality taunts the human sensorium with the prospect of giving the attention span a working over. Through their overlap, one machine multiplies geometrically. For example, it takes *POPism* to inform us that the sleeping machine we encounter in *Sleep* is really a hibernating poem-machine: “At the beginning of the year you could pick up your phone and Dial-A-Poem, and by June you’d be able to even Dial-A-Demonstration—you called a number and a recording actually told you where the public protests around town were that day. The star of my movie *Sleep*, John Giorno, the stockbroker-turned-poet, was the Dial-A-Poem organizer, and the Architectural League was the sponsor. John told me that it was the porno poems that got the most calls” (“1968-1969,” 255). Becoming automatized ourselves, we feel our eyelids turn to titanium; as machines, we visually consume John Giorno turned Dial-A-Poem turned Dial-A-Delta-Wave. Offering himself up as consummate social mirror, Warhol finds his own frail body upon the textual body of his literary and cinematic monoliths. Full beyond any standard of decorum or decency, they are vitally profane.

---

(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), dubs him a logothete, or founder of a language Through (1) self-isolation, (2) articulation, (3) ordering and (4) theatricalization, the Sadean logothete turns the sexual tableau into a scene of excessive pleasuring. Repeating crime in language, de Sade multiplies enjoyment through a narrative doubling; his world text echoes the world for the purpose of maximizing sensual and intellectual rapture: “Thus the Sadean theater (and precisely because it is a theater) is not that ordinary place where we prosaically pass from speech to fact (in line with the empirical design of *application*), but the stage of the primal text, that of the Storyteller (herself the product of how many anterior codes), which traverses a transformational space and engenders a second text, whose primary auditors become its secondary utterers: an unending movement (are we not in turn the readers of both texts?) which is the attribute of writing” (“The Language Space,” 148).

Like Hanoi Hannah's crowded room at the Chelsea Hotel, they are too full. Also like Hannah's boudoir, they are too demanding, and require the birth of cyborg subjectivity (even in *The Chelsea Girls*, Ingrid Superstar can only meet Hannah's demands through servo-mechanicity). Externalizing all memory, they recast the world as one giant time capsule into which all the day's residues are coldly tossed: "I hope Allen Ginsberg doesn't call me about it," Warhol remarks as he tosses Ginsberg's petition against Iran's Princess Ashraf into a monthly time capsule "along with the fan mail, the hate mail, the nut mail, and the record-company press releases" (Colacello, 364). All sewage flows into one stream. Unable to remember anything, Warhol situates memory in the monstrous corpus of his compiled works, which function as a petrified cerebral cortex. Husserl's ITC, a phenomenon toyed with in Warhol's experiments with junkies, finds itself scandalously involuted: it lives on as a monument or memorial (full of names, full of history). An ETC which is also an "etc.," or "et cetera," becomes hideously erected as a testament to nothingness. Eye- and ear-sore, it floods and bursts the sensorium. Perhaps Warhol's body isn't so weak after all—perhaps he's not so swish.

## 2.4 Meta-Celebrity

Super-star Sundae: A dazzle of Schrafft's chocolate ice cream bathed in a sea of spectacular hot fudge joins a sensational splash of whipped cream in a tour de force performance reaching dizzying heights and a socko chocolate cream candy. The vehicle for a super-star is our super bowl (Schrafft's advertisement from 1968, Time Capsule 7).<sup>1</sup>

### Celestuality

Through Andy Warhol, much important thinking about the meanings of celebrity for a capitalist, schizoid world takes place—by Andy, by his significant others (Pat Hackett, Bob Colacello, Brigid Berlin), and by the consumers and contemplators of his works, all of whom fill in the blanks he willfully provides. Productive yet empty, Warhol facilitates reflection on fame and its fluctuations, engaging in some of the thinking himself while encouraging others to beam their ideas onto his polished surface. Both a source of his own observations and a screen on which, in an effort to impersonate, embody and be him, philosophies are projected, Warhol as lived experience constitutes an unparalleled critique of celebrity, a phenomenon suffusing his art and aesthetics from start to finish. Like an early Popeye or Nancy image (*Popeye*, 1961; *Nancy*, 1961), Warhol's philosophy involves the technique of projecting and tracing—in fact, many of his ideas about celebrity necessitate that ghostwriter and silent collaborators alike flesh out the contours of concepts he blows up, catalyzes. Furthermore, his philosophies also

---

<sup>1</sup> Another sundae offered by Schrafft's was the Underground Sundae. For this item, the restaurant tent card read: "Did you see the Andy Warhol Sundae on TV? Try the Original at Schrafft's." Other sundaes in the Warhol campaign included the Electronic Sundae and the Do-Your-Own-Thing Sundae. See also the article "Advertising: Schrafft's Gets With It" (*Time*, October 25, 1968). Overall, the campaign involved both print and television; Time Capsule 7 contains a photograph of Warhol and a Schrafft's adman posing with a sundae. Time Capsule 7 contains all abovementioned Warhol/Schrafft's materials.

subject themselves to the process of his earlier commercial blotted-line technique, in that they are predicated upon a plan of frottage, transfer and distancing.<sup>2</sup> Other horizontalities, even those post-dating Warhol's death—Farrah Fawcett as sculptor, Donna Summer as painter, Madonna Ritchie as author of children's books—do not generate half the heat as Warhol's own tendril-like intrusion into so many aspects of the media machine (music, publishing, modeling, painting, film-making, writing).<sup>3</sup> Exchanging competence for breadth, Warhol follows de Certeau's critique of Freud in *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other* to the T: he, too, makes a "conquista" of disciplines and practices outside his sphere of competence, and with tectonic, historical results. Warhol's comments with respect to actress Janet Gaynor's paintings after her May 1976 opening at Manhattan's Wally Findlay Gallery clearly refer both to Gaynor and himself: "The paintings are so bad...but I bet they go up. Look how big she signs her name. It's like buying an autograph and then you get the flowers thrown in, right?"

---

<sup>2</sup> Bourdon describes the project-and-trace method in *Warhol*: "In the front room on the top floor of his house, Warhol kept an opaque projector, which enabled him to enlarge clippings from newspapers and magazines. After fastening a sheet of drawing paper or a piece of canvas with a white gesso ground to the wall, he projected his 'found object' on it, and rapidly traced the most important contours and any lettering that he wanted to keep" (72). Such lettering includes Nancy's "Brr my snow suit isn't warm enough---Ill put on a sweater too" and "Brr Im still," among other blurbs. Bockris explains the blotted-line technique in *The Life and Death of Andy Warhol*: "For these drawings, Andy would take two pieces of paper, lay them next to each other, and attach them by a piece of tape that would act as a hinge. He would then draw on the right-hand sheet. Before the ink could dry, he would lift the sheet and then press it down on the left-hand sheet. The 'blotted' line was a smudged mirror image of the original line drawing. Not only did Andy like the look, but he also liked the implication that, since his hand had not actually drawn the line on the paper that would hold the final image, he had removed himself one step from the result" (42). *Butterflies* (1955) is an instance of an early blotted-line piece.

<sup>3</sup> Pittsburgh's Andy Warhol Museum debuted Fawcett's collaborations with sculptor Keith Edmier for its *Keith Edmier and Farrah Fawcett 2000* exhibit in May, 2003. The museum's press release explains the nature of the collaboration as follows: "In August 2000, the project began with the idea of a sculpture of Fawcett, but encouraged by Edmier, she decided to make a portrait of him as well. Ultimately, they produced what would be the centerpiece of *Keith Edmier and Farrah Fawcett*, a reclining female in marble and a standing male in bronze, both life-size. Fawcett's active role in the creation of art for the project threw into question distinctions between inspiration and collaboration, artist and muse" (1). Donna Summer's paintings may be viewed at [www.donna-tribute.com/art.htm](http://www.donna-tribute.com/art.htm). As an example of Madonna's *écriture*, see her *Mr. Peabody's Apples* (New York: Callaway, 2003). The dust jacket reads: "This book was inspired by a nearly 300-year-old story that was told to me by my Kabbalah teacher. It is about the power of words."

(Colacello, 289). Comprehending the power of branding, Warhol grants autograph primacy over art—and he is not entirely wrong. Factoring the art market into his aesthetics, Warhol founds his definition about what counts as art upon what counts as economics. Through him, business art truly comes into its own. Contemplating art suddenly means comprehending art's social and financial contexts as well—as when, for example, Warhol ponders the absence of a black audience for his work: “Some blacks recognized me a few times this weekend, and I’m trying to figure out what they recognize so I can somehow sell it to them, whatever it is” (*Diaries*, Sunday, July 3, 1977).

Setting his own life up as a philosophical object meant to be contemplated, Warhol best exemplifies astrophysics' great question of how, as in the prime example of the Big Bang, nothing can produce something. Fashion *philosophe* himself, he also answers fellow thinker Quentin Crisp's important question about how something can be gotten for nothing, of how a minimal energy expenditure can be maximally productive. For both Warhol and Crisp, celebrity is founded upon the algebraic exchange of a positive quantity (fame) for a placeholding nonquantity (nonentity). In *How to Have a Life-Style*, Crisp traces his interest in the proliferative zero to the educative childhood lunchtime acquisition which first taught him the importance of such spontaneous generation:

One day, when I was lying as naked as the Greater London Council would allow on a few planks in the “life” room of Walthamstowe College of Art, a student came and sat beside me. It did not befit my station in life to begin a conversation with her. My supposition was that she wished less to be with me than in front of the only electric heater in the place. I was amazed when she asked me if I would like some of the chocolate that formed the “afters” of her instant lunch.

I sat up at once. My limbs were galvanized, as though insulin had been pumped into my muscles, by the thought of getting something for nothing. The girl broke her slab of chocolate in two and handed me half (3).

For Crisp, the production of celebrity from nonentity echoes other unbalanced nonexchanges; concerned with similar economic aberrances, Warhol takes a related pleasure in the freak appearance of fame. Like Crisp, he also finds himself “galvanized” by the prospect of converting the null set into the productive series. Setting himself up as a “stargazer” (Stephen Koch’s epithet), Warhol makes it his project to reflect the fame of others, while using those reflections to garner fame for himself. Becoming a surface, Warhol makes fame a question of optics. Warhol is a vehicle for fame: through him, this abstract entity comes to know itself as such, and to realize its possibilities through earthly objectification. Since all in Warhol begins and ends with fame, I have chosen to end my exposition with meta-celebrity, or the philosophy of fame. That Andy Warhol counts as a philosopher (as well as philosophical object) poses huge problems for philosophy as a discipline. That recorded and ghostwritten texts can accede to such an eminent status as “philosophy” comes across as either vapid or cynical—and decidedly POMO. Such a move recalls Arendt’s description of the post-World War I Germany’s love of Hitler as clod: “The temporary alliance between the elite and the mob rested largely on this genuine delight with which the former watched the latter destroy respectability. This could be achieved when the German steel barons were forced to deal with and receive socially Hitler the housepainter and self-admitted former derelict, as it could be with the crude and vulgar forgeries perpetrated by the totalitarian movements in all fields of intellectual life, insofar as they gathered all the subterranean, nonrespectable elements of

European history into one consistent picture” (*The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 333).<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps we are at that point in history when philosophers are screens. Or perhaps they have always been surface-projections (after all, Socrates writes nothing, his foundational ideas codified and organized by his disciple Plato in the form of plays). Still, since it is Warhol who elevates fame and makes it worthy of intense reflection, and since it is he who never forsakes the alliance of fame with nothingness, Warhol does come off as a philosopher function, or  $f(p)$ .

Warholian processing turns even the most banal and forgettable comments into memorable moments. For example, throughout the *Diaries*, we witness his constant attention to his own appearance: “Got my live-in contacts but I can’t read or draw in them. Do they have bifocals you can wear with contacts? It’s so scary to wake up in the middle of the night and be able to see” (Tuesday, August 11, 1981). Normality is always painted in the fauve colors of the bizarre—in this quote, vision itself becomes a source of fright rather than a benevolent sense granting one a view of one’s environment. Sight and unsight cross wires, exiting a chiasm on opposite sides. Furthermore, vision inhibits: rather than facilitate the production of his art, lenses impede it—implying that he is a better artist when blind or half-sighted. Even odder is the fact that Warhol’s new contacts will boost his performance as a model. That someone with so oddball an appearance should ever qualify as model material seems almost like a cruel insider joke (as in John Waters’ 1972 film *Female Trouble*, the repulsive is given new life as the gorgeous).

---

<sup>4</sup> In Arendt’s analysis, the disempowered mob (defined as “the underworld of the bourgeois class”) and the nihilistic elite work together to destroy respectability (337). Through this move, the elite loses power and the mob attempts to gain it. Placing their faith in “the fascinating ‘abnormal,’” the elite unwittingly allows the mob to liquidate them (332). For while the elite use the mob as source of enjoyment (they watch them *épater la bourgeoisie*), the mob ends up inverting a world order (and instituting totalitarian rule). In this schema, neither class ends up winning, since the mob too eventually finds itself denied access to power by the organization it serio-comically champions.

Warhol had always been interested in modeling, though, as a 1968 photo shoot, “The Status Shirt Put On,” demonstrates. The caption reads: “Andy Warhol, right, garnishes velvet pants (\$40, from Stone the Crows) with chains, belts and a lace-trimmed dinner shirt from Turnbull & Asser (\$40, Bonwit Teller).”<sup>5</sup> Situated at the confluence of status, fashion and chicanery, Warhol as putter-on emerges from his chrysalis as a model—someone meant to be looked at and emulated, a body meant to be run through the media machine and copied across the country and the world. As the *Diaries* draw to a close and Warhol vaporizes to an infinitesimal point, his modeling career provides him with his final cultural act: “In the morning I was preparing myself for my appearance in the fashion show Benjamin coordinated at the Tunnel. They’d sent the clothes over and I look like Liberace in them. Should I just go all the way and *be* the new Liberace? Snakeskin and rabbit fur. Julian Schnabel (*laughs*) would be so impressed he would start wearing them” (Tuesday, February 17, 1987).<sup>6</sup>

Colacello is less than kind in his analysis of Warhol as model:

Zoli did get him a couple of runway jobs and Daniela Morela put him in a *L’Uomo Vogue* spread jumping up and down with some other cute guys, but it was obvious that he was being used for his joke value. That October, Halston asked him to model in a Martha Graham charity fashion show as Bloomingdale’s. He didn’t appear until the end of the show, accompanied by Victor Hugo. His face was caked with makeup and he wore a voluminous royal blue taffeta smock with a big red bow around his neck. He looked like a cross between a clown and a Christmas

---

<sup>5</sup> Warhol’s modeling pose is captured in Time Capsule –12. It is dated November 12, 1968, and appeared in the magazine *Look*.

<sup>6</sup> Warhol and Miles Davis are the celebrity models for this show. As Colacello relays, Warhol is poised at the brink of physical breakdown: “‘Andy stood in a cold dressing room for hours,’ said Stuart Pivar, who had taken him to the Tunnel in his limo, ‘waiting to model. He was in terrible pain.’ In the last photograph of Andy ever taken, coming down the runway with Miles Davis, his eyes were alight with the thrill of stardom, but his lips were tense and taut, as if he were holding on for dear life. ‘Get me out of here, Stuart,’ he gasped backstage. ‘I feel like I’m going to die’” (490). Five days later, he does.

present. Victor wore the same outfit in emerald green. As Andy minced down the runway, I could hear the ladies around me buzz. The words they used were *weirdo*, *creep*, and *sissy* (Colacello, 442-443).

Bursting Warhol's balloon, and probably paying him back for countless episodes of personal humiliation, Colacello points out the strangeness of Warhol's new career choice (he even consents to go-sees for Zoli—odd behavior for a star). Like so many other classes of people (old bags, debts), models pique Andy's curiosity by virtue of their ontological freshness—since, as pointed out by Steven Fried in his *The Tragedy of Supermodel Gia*, models had not come into their own until the 70s, when agencies like Ford and Elite transformed young hopefuls into world-class visual icons (the first wave of supermodels).<sup>7</sup> In his *Diaries*, Warhol expresses a keen interest in model anthropology: how this new breed of human beings and these new workers comport themselves demands anthropological attention. Their language bemuses him: “Jerry Hall came by with a Halston model named Carol, and models just all talk that baby talk, the girls *and* the boys—you always know you're talking to a model” (Wednesday, July 8, 1981). Like all other industry-bound jargons, model talk emerges from a concrete set of practices and concerns. All creatures from the modeling industry seem to partake of its linguistic possibilities: “Went into the kitchen for coffee in the main house. Pat Cleveland was reading her Latin books and her mind-control books...She was after Jon, showing him how to walk like you have a dime up your ass and they did that well. She

---

<sup>7</sup> See Stephen Fried's *The Tragedy of Supermodel Gia* (New York: Pocket Books, 1993). Documenting both the life of fashion model Gia Carangi and the development of the modeling industry in 1970s America, Fried details the emergence of the supermodel as cultural icon: “It was a whole new world for the *fashionistas*: the army of models, photographers, designers, hair and makeup people, stylists and editors who toiled daily in the beauty trenches. The ‘famous non-famous’ people were joining the ranks of the truly famous” (100). Model wars among the Ford, Wilhemina and Elite agencies solidified the supermodel's fame (see “Model War Zone,” 143-156).

talks model talk. And she plays the flute. And she does yoga. All those things” (Saturday, July 11, 1981). Ontologically distinct from other public creatures, models have their own enunciative staples, their own rules for structuring an utterance. Like Martians, they have their own unique mode of communicating. Ever interested in specificity, Warhol cannot help but be intrigued by the novelty of their speech; in its simplicity (it borders on baby-talk), and in its constant juvenilization (women become girls; men become boys), their language in fact mirrors his own (the autograph replaces the signature; men and women become “the kids”). Saturated with Hollywoodisms, like “up-there” or “the kids,” Warhol’s vocabulary and syntax point to the existence of other linguistic subsystems and idioms. Of course not all these languages are bodily, as when Warhol describes the end of an unsuccessful *Saturday Night Live* meeting during which he proposed he be a weekly guest: “And then the meeting ended Hollywood-style—that’s where the meeting’s suddenly over and they ignore you and talk about other things. They don’t say, ‘Thank you, it was nice of you to come.’ Suddenly they just drop you, only you’re still sitting there, so it’s like you’re invisible. It’s kind of great” (Tuesday, September 22, 1981). What matters most is the existence of what de Certeau refers to as a “way of operating,” a mode of getting around.<sup>8</sup>

Warhol’s fascination with celebrity ontologies informs his own attention to his development over time. Reflecting important fashion debates of the decades he inhabits,

---

<sup>8</sup> For de Certeau, any way of getting around qualifies as an “enunciative practice.” In his essay “Walking in the City,” he identifies ambulation as one such entity. Through it, synecdoche (part of a neighborhood is taken for the whole of it) and asyndeton (a short-cut is taken for the purpose of efficiency) comprise the pedestrian speech act: “The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language or to the statements uttered. At the most elementary level, it has a triple ‘enunciative’ function: it is a process of *appropriation* of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language); and it implies *relations* among differentiated positions, that is, among pragmatic ‘contracts’ in the form of movements (just as verbal enunciation is an ‘allocution,’ ‘posits another opposite’ the speaker and puts contracts between interlocutors into action)” (*The Practice of Everyday Life*, 97-98).

Warhol makes his body a living record of all that transpires around it. As in Richard Avedon's famous photograph of Warhol's torso (*Andy Warhol, Artist, New York City, 8/20/69*), his body tells a story—in this instance, about Valerie Solanas' rage and its traces. Warhol gets to know Warhol, recording his own oscillations in image: "Everyone tells me they like my hair this new way. I cut it every day. It's almost a crewcut. Fred said I dress like the kids I hang around with now, he likes it. I guess the preppie look really is big because of the *Preppie Handbook*. I'm wearing all of Jed's leftover clothes, the ones he left behind. I'm so skinny they fit me now" (Wednesday, July 8, 1981). In the spirit of Adrian Piper, Warhol monitors his appearance closely, never failing to provide his readers with the details of his transformation from one ontological position to another.<sup>9</sup> With almost an evolutionary sensibility, Warhol traces the development of new styles while also showing the effect they have on his own aesthetic of dressing. Inextricably immersed in time, Warhol gives in to its flows, which wash over him, carrying his body along with their currents and undertows. Similarly, he also keeps meticulous track of styles of locomotion, as when, after a Twyla Tharp show, he comments: "The dancing, it's a funny new kind of dancing, falling and tripping, and it looks like disco dancing. It looks like if you had a creative person on the disco floor, that they would do this (intermission drinks \$10)" (Thursday, February 15, 1979). Using his early films, like *Vinyl*, to document dance styles, such as the frug, Warhol records different ways of posturing and moving the body. He also documents the emergence of new social diseases: "The *Donahue Show* was on the flasher problem. This is a big important new problem, right? Men who flash. A wife and her husband who flashed

---

<sup>9</sup> In her 1971 series *Food for the Spirit*, Piper photodocuments the results of a summer of simultaneous fasting and reading Kant. As her body shrinks, her mind expands—or does it? Positing Kant as torture, Piper's photographs keep track of her body and its changes. Like Warhol, she notices everything.

were on, they were in the dark, and businessmen and lawyers who flashed” (Monday, July 28, 1980). Within the hypermediated universe of capitalism, everything has its fifteen moments of fame, including problems. Ever the voyeur, Warhol makes note of new trends in exhibitionism, well aware that the job of the talk show is to fabricate and disseminate new fears (What do I do if my neighbor flashes me?, etc.). Fears, too, are commodities, as discussed by Barry Glossner in his *The Culture of Fear*. Alongside locomotionary styles and fashion creature ontologies, anxieties wax and wane in popularity, produced, dissolved and eventually recycled by the media as products-of-the-week (just as, in *POPism*, Warhol describes Ethel Scull as exhibiting a “You’re-my-friend-this-week” style (86)).<sup>10</sup> Recognizing the new status of the media in everyday life, Warhol dedicates himself to recording its fluctuations for the purposes of fashion documentary, biography and contemplation (Foucault’s “care of self” receiving the royal treatment).

Few stylewatchers or trend-spotters qualify as philosophical. Warhol’s unremitting attention to the movements of time do earn him the nomination, perhaps even accession to, the category. Whether or not he has anything productive to say, he does, strangely enough, qualify as an important thinker. In discussing the development of *Philosophy*, for example, Colacello cannot deny the fact that Warhol’s publishers credit

---

<sup>10</sup> See Barry Glossner’s *The Culture of Fear* (New York: Basic Books, 1999). According to Glossner, fear becomes commodified in the form of crime, drugs, minorities, teen moms, teen psychopaths, microbes, air disasters, and road rage. Glossner’s basic point is that American culture is based in the creation and circulation of erratic fears, such as the “monster mom” of welfare fame or the airborne virus which will eventually wipe out human civilization. Like Warhol’s “flasher problem,” the road rage problem or the Columbine High syndrome count as entertainment, and serve to fuel media industries. Such industries need fear in order to survive—and so they fabricate it. A newspaper like *Weekly World News* could never exist without commodified terror. See, for example, “Gay Aliens Found in UFO Wreck!” (June 14, 2004), an article in which homophobia and ET-phobia are fused beautifully.

him with a philosophy irrespective of content or merit. The world wants Warhol to be a philosopher; indeed, it almost requires him to be one, regardless of his mind's content:

Then along came a literary agent named Mrs. Carlton Cole...Roz [Cole] told Andy that he should write his autobiography. He told her that I was writing his biography, referring to my Warhol films book, which Curtis Brown had sent to five or six publishing houses since Dutton dropped it, with no luck. Roz was very quick on her feet: "Well, why don't you write your *philosophy*. I mean, if anyone has a philosophy, it's got to be you." Andy loved that idea—hadn't he been telling me to put "lots of philosophy" into the Fantasy Diary? Of course, his idea of philosophy was going shopping for underwear, and musing on love and sex along the way—and why not? "Philosophy is anything, Bob. Just make it up" (Colacello, 184).

Roz Cole, Arthur Danto, even myself: people need Warhol to be a philosopher. Philosophy personified, Warhol himself is almost a conceptual entity—an idea that has gone too far (ideological, it exhibits what Arendt identifies in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* as a creepy consistency). Willingly occupying the zero slot, Warhol represents the utter impossibility of nothingness in American culture, the fact that Americans simply do not allow it to exist, forever cramming it with positive content. Eloquently articulating his nothingness, Warhol solidifies into positive existence. In the popular imagination, he is the embodiment of philosophy—his art and personality depend upon it for their existence. Acting as support to his cultural endeavors, philosophy defines Warhol's personhood, machinehood and glamorous nothingness. Positing glamour as a breakdown in the fashion system, Warhol offers a worldview in which the *faux pas*, the leftover and the mismatched forge an aesthetics of desperation.

## Social Collage

As philosopher of glamour and celebrity, Warhol is most interested in generating various social collages, creations offering an exciting miscontextualization of human contents. While for Proust such compositions fall under the category of the “social kaleidoscope” (when they are viewed in terms of space) or the “peepshow of the years” (when they are viewed in terms of time), for Andy Warhol the social text is read in terms of that important modern visual form, the collage.<sup>11</sup> The Warholian social collage involves the application of collage’s structural principles—for example, the juxtaposition of disparate and incommensurable elements, the brute removal of objects from their niches, the jamming of the collagespace with too much material, the use of irregular sutures and the effect of heteroglossia—to the social tableau.<sup>12</sup> Transferring the collage into the sphere of the interpersonal, Warhol replaces the torn images and scraps of a Ray Johnson or a Hannah Höch with the thrust-together bodies of human beings in the fabrication of the perfect happening, party or photo op. Warholian social collage is radically heterogenous, a sentiment he mouths in his and Pat Hackett’s posthumously

---

<sup>11</sup> Proust’s social kaleidoscope represents principles of angular momentum and sedimentation: “It was true that the social kaleidoscope was in the act of turning and that the Dreyfus case was shortly to relegate the Jews to the lowest rung of the social ladder” (*The Guermantes Way*, Chapter 1, 194). His temporal *socius* follows an archaeological logic. Emerging from seclusion, *Time Regained*’s narrator encounters a spasm of gerontophobia: “For all these reasons a party like this at which I found myself was something much more valuable than an image of the past: it offered me as it were all the successive images—which I had never seen—which separated the past from the present, better still it showed me the relationship that existed between the present and the past; it was like an old-fashioned peepshow, but a peepshow of the years, the vision not of a moment but of a person situated in the distorting perspective of Time” (965).

<sup>12</sup> Regarding heteroglossia, see Mikhail Bakhtin’s *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas, 1982). My contention is that the skewed images of collage speak cacophonously, allowing the various discourses from which they have been extruded to concatenate. Rachel Blau Duplessis explores the heteroglossic potential of collage in her *Drafts* (Elmwood, CT: Potes & Poets Press, 1991): “These spaces of dispersion/ are marked with bourns/ which disappear amid the fields of scree/ as stones./ So gifts are swallowed up by gifts./ Even erasure is erased./ In this, what residue remains?” (“Diasporas,” 71).

published *Andy Warhol's Party Book* with reference to that supreme social fetish, the party: "What's the purpose of a party? In big cities like New York the party is essentially a mechanism for bringing people together who wouldn't otherwise be together, such as a wrestler and a sculptor. In smaller communities like, say, an army base, the party is an opportunity for the same people who are always together to be together *again*, but under different circumstances" (8). Either "creating a new scene" or "raising the excitement level" of a habitual scene, the party as social collage involves either the interaction of unrelated presences, or the intensification of the ordinary through its rearticulation in an unfamiliar context. Requiring presence, the social collage forces different entities to communicate with one another, often with mixed results. Imbricated in an intense present, the social collage's only requirement is full embodiment: "Sex and parties are the two things that you still have to actually be there for—things that involve you and other people. For sex and parties, you still have to physically bring your lump of protoplasm and get it close to somebody else's. To carry on friendships or to cash checks or buy clothes, you can just make a phone call or send a computer message. To give court testimony or look for a date or read your own will after you're dead, you can send a videotape. To impregnate somebody and reproduce yourself, you can just send sperm. You don't even have to be there to fight a war—you just send a bomb" (7-8).

Though surviving and passing to posterity in the form of the snapshot or its verbal analogue, the celebrity report, social collage inhabits the momentary, which it fills to the breaking point. Capitalizing upon connotation as much as denotation, the social collage lives via the resonance of reputations and the interplay of auras. As one caption in *Andy Warhol's Party Book* reads: "Michael Douglas, Yoko Ono, 'Jezebel,' and Jann Wenner

smoking” (60).<sup>13</sup> Through social collage, somebodies (Michael Douglas, Yoko Ono) and nobodies (Jezebel, Jann Wenner) rub their coronal fringes against one another, producing a short-lived but powerful spark to be emitted. Contact excites. Whoever Jezebel and Jann Wenner are, they borrow surplus fame from Michael and Yoko, which bathes them in a moonlike, immortalizing glow. The Time Capsules also collect such nobodies: “letter, to AW, fr ‘a person named Maggie’ in Williamsburg, VA, posted June 9 1969, ‘I would very much like to be in one of your movies...I can’t sing or act, but I’m an expert at being me” (inventory, TC 7); “Andy: I want to be one of your crows, this is the *last time* I’ll tell you” (letter from Lance Russell, Santa Barbara, TC -17). Dreaming of being somebodies, characters like Maggie and Lance pressure Warhol, whose magic wand promises to turn them into cinematic baubles. Repositories of stars and wash-outs, the Time Capsules are Warhol’s greatest social collages. Their juxtapositions of objects and human artifacts create productive and radiant vortices—as when, for example, the *Diaries* assay the elements of one such box: “I opened up one of the boxes in the back that’s being moved and it had 16mm rolls of film and letters from Ray Johnson the artist and I think my bloodstained clothes from when I was shot” (Tuesday, May 22, 1984). Letters from an eminent *collagiste* enter into a new collage along with residues of violence and potential works of art. A party-in-a-box, the Time Capsules take up the logic of mixing and mingling: if people are things, then they, too, can be played with, rearranged, deposited.

---

<sup>13</sup> *Andy Warhol’s Party Book* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1988) is the penultimate Warhol/Hackett venture. Composed of tape-recorded conversations with Warhol and eminent others—party diva Dianne Brill, performance artist Ann Magnuson, film-maker John Waters, and varied doormen, doll collectors and other assorted freaks, such as “Carol,” whose only claim to fame is that she is an alcoholic—Warhol and Hackett apply the tape-and-transcribe method to their final fetish, the party.

Using human nervous energy, the social collage, whether it occur in or out of the box, runs on insecurity and awkwardness; a glorified *faux pas* which has stopped being a joke and demands serious processing, the social collage is an energy-storing knot clotting social space with its refusal to dissipate.<sup>14</sup> *POPism* recalls one such beautiful mess, as Brigid Berlin creates a scene in the presence of music stars Bob Dylan and Brian Jones and a magically appearing Jane Holzer—all while Warhol focuses on unrelated issues:

The Duchess was frantic because nobody was paying attention to her, to whether she should lose a hundred pounds and put her hair in pigtails or just switch from Honey Amber to Tawny Peach Blush-on. She wasn't impressed with Dylan or the Rolling Stones because she was over thirty and never listened to rock if she could help it. She glanced over toward tiny Dylan and even more tiny Brian [Jones] with his pale, pale skin and fluffy strawberry blond hair and said as loud as she could, "Those aren't *men*, my dear. I like them tall and craggy and divine like Greg Peck." Then the Duchess got up on a bicycle that someone had propped against a wall and started pedaling around the red couch just as Jane Holzer walked in. I was asking Brian about a certain beautiful but dizzy English actress we both knew (150).

Successful gatherings depend upon a social gradient; its unevenness determines the flow of bodies and personalities. In *Andy Warhol's Party Book*, Danceteria/Palladium/Tunnel "doorman/doyen/dilettante" Hauoi Montaug describes the importance of difference in generating party energy: "You don't want a homogenous crowd inside a club, because people really do go to nightclubs to make fun of the person standing across the dance

---

<sup>14</sup> For Warhol, the *faux pas* is an integral component to fashionability: "Oh, and I'm forgetting the most glamorous thing of my opening. Warren Beatty walked in with Diane Keaton and I made a *faux pas* by saying, 'I just read that article about you in *Playgirl*,' and they said 'Oh my God!' and ran out" (Saturday, November 21, 1981). Furthermore, in *Andy Warhol's Party Book*, Warhol presents himself as a social nullity: "I don't have those beautiful social graces so I'm not the greatest guest and I'm certainly not the greatest host, either, since I don't know how to make people feel (a) comfortable or (b) uncomfortable in an exciting way" (11). Ungraceful, Warhol founds his theory of fashion upon social breakdown and disfunction.

floor, so nobody's really happy if everybody in the room looks the same as they do" (53). Managing the passage of torsos across a velvet membrane, the doorman catches Warhol's eye. Whether he be a nobody, like Hauoi Montaug, or an ultra-body, like Studio 54's Steve Rubell, the gatekeeper acts as a social frame, keeping desirable and undesirable elements from touching one another. Responsible for ensuring a thermogenic diversity, he performs the vital function of creating a manageable chaos (unlike, for example, the co-op doorman, whose task is to regulate a predetermined flow, or the department store doorman, whose responsibility is to please and ingratiate). As with Brigid's manic bicycle ride through the Factory, social eclecticism guarantees success in the form of drama. Set against the background of rock-and-roll stars whiling away the day's hours in the informality of a casual visit, Brigid's outburst occurs in sync with Park Avenue socialite and debutante Jane Holzer's serendipitous arrival.<sup>15</sup> Adding up to chaos, the social collage is the lived experience of radical heterogeneity as it fortuitously and unfortuitously transpires. Taking as its upper limit the Valerie Solanas scenario, social collage remains a Warholian technique; bordering death, it requires the cultivation of just enough volatility to pique interest without so much that police intervention or hospitalization is necessary.

Ultimately, the social collage is meant to be consumed—hence the presence of celebrated nightcrawler Dianne Brill in *Andy Warhol's Party Book*. Like Warhol's other famous party monsters, such as Ondine, Edie Sedgwick, Brigid, Halston, Liza or Victor Hugo, Brill dedicates her life to frivolity, and consequently becomes a source of

---

<sup>15</sup> Like Edie Sedgwick and Brigid Berlin, Baby Jane Holzer is one of Warhol's "duchesses." She stars in some lesser-known films, like *Soap Opera* and *Couch* (both 1964). In 1964, Tom Wolfe pronounces her "Girl of the Year." By the time the *Diaries* roll around, she no longer qualifies as a Beauty: "Then we left to walk over to Odeon for dinner and there was this 'hooker' on the street and it turned out to be Jane Holzer. She was so fat. I couldn't believe it" (Saturday, September 20, 1986).

fascination for a man who has dedicated his life to refashioning partying into a philosophical object and project. For Brill, as for Warhol, parties are work; bringing home the bacon necessitates schmoozing, slumming and event-hopping, a lifestyle not far removed from Warhol's. In Jean Stein's *Edie*, Warhol describes Edie's blueblood method of consuming human groups as they concatenate: "She always wanted to leave. Even if a party was good, she wanted to leave. It's the way they work now in St. Moritz; I mean, people who spend fortunes to have parties can't wait until they're over so they can go somewhere else. I don't understand that. Can't wait to go...and there's no place to go. These people in big, expensive cars can't wait to get to the next party...and there's no next party. They just get up and leave. It's really funny. But Edie was like that. She just couldn't wait to get to the next place" (200). Similarly, through Dianne's words, an aesthetic of partying emerges, this time for an 80s audience steeped in place-names like Area, Palladium, Save the Robot, Tunnel or Limelight. Professional partier, Brill is yet another wild child to blip across Warhol's radar screen—one final Girl of the Year. In the rare event that readers of the future might not recognize her image without cues, Warhol and Hackett introduce Brill as follows: "Dianne Brill is a fashion designer who makes nobodies feel like somebodies with the big hellos she gives to everybody. She was the first young girl in decades to really play up a big body with big curves and big cleavage. In mid-eighty-six, when the following conversation took place, she operated full tilt all night as the ultimate Party Girl and earned herself the title 'Queen of the Night'" (42).<sup>16</sup> Brill describes her favorite party, one thrown with a coffee theme in

---

<sup>16</sup> Brill's status as reigning monarch of nighttime Manhattan receives confirmation by James St. James, who, in *Disco Bloodbath*, presents her godliness: "At the tippy-top of this system was the nightclub Area, the downtown society magazine *Details*, and the titular Queen of the Night, Dianne Brill. The goal, then,

imitation of a “Coffee Achievers” TV commercial running in the late eighties: “We did a beautiful décor with enormous coffee beans, and it was a total environment, things happening all the time—talking on the phone drinking coffee, vignettes, push-up bras and stuff... We had the Shirelles come out and sing Happy Birthday to me, and while we were eating, tons of acts came out, all girls dressed like me—clones—doing coffee poses”

(43). Offering advice on how to hit all the major parties up while avoiding the “retardos,” Brill flits from one social collage to another, having mastered the art of timing (when to appear, when to vanish): “It’s good to have integration, but you don’t want to have people who go, ‘Wow, is that your real hair? Are you from New York?’ Retardos. If you suspect it’s going to be like that, go during the first half hour and then leave, because that’s when all the interesting people will be there, since they know what you know—that it’s not going to be a long-run fun party. They may even skip it altogether, and you may, too” (43). A blonder, younger version of Andy, Brill enters Warhol’s aesthetic both as paragon of taste and total loser. The *Diaries* reports one sad incident in which Brill’s celebrity fails. Attempting to jump onstage during an early Madonna concert at the club Private Eyes, Brill finds her celebrity to have evaporated: “And Dianne Brill tried to get on the platform and the guy just pushed her back and I said, ‘Don’t you know who that is? It’s Dianne Brill,’ but he still wouldn’t let her up. And she was so conspicuous in her rubber outfit and Frederick’s of Hollywood stuff and everything, so she was really humiliated, and that’s the way things go—you think you have so much pizzazz and then something like that happens in front of your friends” (Wednesday, November 7, 1984). Stuffed into designer lingerie, her curvy body—

---

was to have your picture in *Details*, with Dianne, in the VIP room of Area. If that happened, well, God himself would drop out of the heavens and give you a drink ticket” (43).

“conspicuous”—receives the opposite of the royal treatment. Somebody collapses to nobody. Pop.

Moments like Dianne Brill’s mortification in clubland bring to the forefront the problem of the abject, a concern cropping up almost ubiquitously throughout Warhol’s works. As 1.1 details, in her *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Julia Kristeva provides the abject with its most definitive formulation. For Kristeva, the abject is all that the subject must extrude from itself in order to remain a subject through the intense process of *assujétissement*. Dangerous, the abject places in peril those who embrace it—especially given that, culturally, human subjects are instructed on how to avoid it. Initially coming into existence as the tabooed bodily excretion—the paradigmatic example would be menstrual blood—the abject is all that flows away from the body, all that must be removed from interstitial space in order for health and hygiene to result. Hence Kristeva’s aphorism “To each ego its object, to each superego its abject,” by which she indicates the social nature of abjection (it is imposed upon the psyche as a socially inherited, Lamarckian prohibition) (2). Ultimately, the abject as bodily extrojectum signifies death: “No, as in true theater, without makeup or masks, refuse and corpses *show me* what I permanently thrust aside in order to live. These bodily fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death. There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being. My body extricates itself, as being alive, from that border. Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit—*cadere, cadaver*” (3). Though beginning its illustrious career as a revolting, rejected bodily flow, the abject comes also to demarcate classes of beings

which one must deny in order to remain healthy, normal. Characterized as the “deject,” the human being who occupies the undesirable subject position—for example, the sexual, racial or socioeconomic untouchable—experiences spatial and existential disorientation:

Instead of sounding himself as to his “being,” he does so concerning his place: “*Where* am I” instead of “*Who* am I?” For the space that engrosses the deject, the excluded, is never *one*, nor *homogenous*, nor *totalizable*, but essentially divisible, foldable, and catastrophic. A deviser of territories, languages, works, the *deject* never stops demarcating his universe whose fluid confines—for they are constituted of a non-object, the abject—constantly question his solidity and impel him to start afresh. A tireless builder, the deject is in short a *stray* (8).

Delinquent, he who embraces the abject, or to whom the abject is attributed, lives at the fringes of polite society. Identified with urine, fecal matter and menstrual flows, the deject is punished for his inclusion of materials or positions culturally deemed undesirable. As with Judith Butler’s discussion of “abject heterosexuality” in *Bodies That Matter*, disavowal of the abject becomes a precondition of organic health.<sup>17</sup> Spat out of society’s mouth, the deject finds himself irreversibly tainted by the abject, which guarantees his exclusion from the world, his being situated at its border along with the corpse and other reminders of death and mortality (all of which paradoxically support the very identities disavowed).

Social effluvia forever lurk within Warhol’s collages. Kristeva’s remarks with regard to Proust and his obsession with the abject ring true for Warhol as well:

---

<sup>17</sup> Arguing for the incoherence of identity, Butler criticizes the gay rejection of heterosexuality. Like the straight abjecting of homosexuality, this treatment also runs the risk of forcing coherence upon identity in order to give it the semblance of stability: “For what cannot be avowed as a constitutive identification of any given subject-position runs the risk of becoming not only externalized in a degraded form, but repeatedly repudiated and subjected to a policy of disavowal. To a certain extent constitutive identifications are precisely those which are always disavowed, for, contrary to Hegel, the subject cannot reflect on the entire process of its formation” (“Phantasmic Identification,” *Bodies That Matter*, 113).

“Abjection, with Proust, is fashionable, if not social; it is the foul lining of society” (20). As in the example of Dianne Brill’s expulsion from Madonna’s charmed performance space, the rejected individual continues to generate the glamour of no glamour within Warhol’s many frames. Warhol’s work with the abject is twofold: (1) he notices and documents its appearances, and (2) recuperates it by integrating it into the fashion tableau. Identifying as abject himself, Warhol as outsider seeks out other weirdos, crackpots and pariahs, the majority of whom are established as chic and visually arresting. Putting the wrong person in the right place, Warhol destabilizes various orders through the forced intrusion of otherness—a difference which must be countenanced. Like the *faux pas*, the abjected body represents the very break in the machine’s functioning which guarantees further functioning (in Deleuze’s and Guattari’s language, it is not a break, but a “break-flow”). Rather than flow evenly and uniformly, glamour thrives on the eddy, the vortex, the overflow. Depending upon a counter-osmotic gradient, chicness and celebrity throw caution to the wind where the regulation of membrane activity is concerned. A body like Brigid Berlin’s, though ridiculed by Warhol at times, cements a new species of fame—her bare-breasted presence in Steven Meisel’s Factory photograph both highlights her status as *demi-mondaine* while infusing the aboveground with the sensual excess of the subterranean. A perverse Willendorf Venus, she wields her massiveness as an aesthetic weapon, thrusting her pendulous breasts in the face of modernism. Similarly, the presence of black model Donyale Luna in Warhol’s film *Camp* (1965) or of black intellectual Dorothy Dean in *My Hustler* (1965) represent a profound concatenation of lives and discourses. Like Brigid, they too scandalize and vorticize, forcing their irrepressible presences upon an audience unsure as

to how they are to receive the imposition. The social collage depends upon such destabilization, deriving its energy from the disequilibrium of misplaced bodies.

Appearing after a seemingly interminable series of performers, all of whom attempt to redefine camp sensibility (Baby Jane Holzer, Mario Montez, Jack Smith, Fou-Fou), Luna is *Camp's* only Beauty. Dancing in a fur coat, she connotes wealth, worldliness and fun, while also opening the film to the world of modeling. One discourse gives way to another—horizontalness prevails. Running out during her performance, *Camp* crashes against its own limit conditions. It has no option but to end after Luna has answered its central question, “What is Camp?,” by remaining impervious to it. “Do you want me to go?” she almost whispers, inquiring as to whether or not it is her turn to partake of the game. “Put the music on.” Oblivious to the problem of camp, she does her own thing—an act the film cannot survive. Fashion designer Paco Rabanne confirms Luna’s dual status as glam and abject in his autobiography *Journey*. Having first used Luna in his 1964 “Robes Importables” (unwearable dresses) show at the George V Hôtel in Paris, Rabanne, like Warhol, understands the productive power of the othered body:

One can imagine the shock of a public used to that kind of fashion event when confronted with warrior girls, covered in metal armour made of aluminum triangles linked with rings or rivets, moulded in sheets of sliced Rhodoid. It was a revolution in high fashion, all the more so because it was the first time that black models had been used, all dancing frenetically to the sound of Pierre Boulez’s “Le Marteau Sans Maître”. Chaos and confusion broke out, an incredible tumult reigned, some people got up, screaming, horrified at the sight of these amazons dressed in chain-mail, swinging their hips to “savage” music. Others manifested their approval in uproarious fashion under the perplexed eye of members of the Parisian bourgeoisie. The prank had worked (*Journey*, 87).

Articulated in the form of a joke, the abject represented by Luna stops being funny: she isn't going anywhere, and in fact represents the future of American glamour both for the U.S. and its world market. While Paco Rabanne reports being spit upon for offering a Rhodoid-clad Luna as impossible model wearing an unwearable garment, Andy Warhol is able one year later to include her within *Camp*'s collage without much hubbub.<sup>18</sup>

Allowing the film to run out during her apparition, he solidifies her importance to his enterprise. Ultimately, camp doesn't matter, but glamour does—especially in its black manifestation.

In Dorothy Dean's precarious case, her mysterious and miraculous intrusion in the final moments of *My Hustler* (1965) blows the film wide open. As *My Hustler* (1965) is about to end, Dorothy appears from an alternate order than the microcosm of the white Fire Island hustler. We have just been given perhaps cinema's longest glimpse into what goes on in the secret world of the hustler's transformation chamber. For a glorious sequence of golden minutes, we have watched Paul America and the Sugar Plum Fairy, competing tricks, perform a charmed ballet of circulating bodies, each carcass vying for space in front of the scene's star presence, the mirror. And we have listened to Sugar Plum dispense hustling advice to the younger and less-experienced America, who has been instructed as to how he can get more bang from his buck, how he can save enough

---

<sup>18</sup> “‘Here is the first Black model in Paris, Kellie,’ he declared with complete authority. ‘There were Kellie and Donyale Luna, whom I presented to Salvador Dali, who shot her in his films. But Kellie is really the first Black mannequin, and it’s because of her that the American press spit in my face. Literally, splat. I was back in the dressing room. I watched that coming, the girls from *American Vogue* and *Harper’s Bazaar*. ‘Why did you do that?’ they said. ‘You have no right to do that, to take those kind of Girls. Fashion is for us. White people.’ They spit in my face, I had to wipe it off” (56). Rabanne is quoted in Barbara Summers’ *Skin Deep: Inside the World of Black Fashion Models* (New York: Amistad Press, 1998).

money to retire from the profession in style, maybe earning a car or two along the way. As a coda to the scene of male assembly, of how it is that men prepare for public display, Geneviève Charbon, Rival #1 for Paul's body, arrives, magically clutching a giant conch shell from which, perhaps, some soft marine body has escaped in its oceanic peregrinations. She has sensed Sugar Plum's question for Paul, "What's your game anyway?", answering it by offering him escape from Fire Island, travel, displacement. Paul does not respond, his coiffure continuing uninterrupted. She has missed the mark. Next, Ed Hood, Rival #2, and Paul's "john," arrives, making a similar offer: travel, girls, boys, whatever Paul wants. Again, Paul, lost narcissistically in the smooth, dreamy surface of the mirror, is completely unresponsive. Rival #3, Sugar Plum, his body cached away in some mysterious alcove or spatiotemporal fold, exerts a fantastic and phantomlike presence, his ignored and, for Geneviève and Ed, invisible body existing merely as a reflection in a glass that quite clearly belongs to Mr. America: the "your" in "I'll be your mirror" refers only to Paul. Sugar Plum's time as star prostitute has elapsed. Enter Dorothy, compact and lip pencil in hand. "You are very pretty but you are not exactly *literate*. Sweetie, I will get you educated...I mean, why be tied down to these old faggots?" (as quoted in Als, 80). End of film. Disappearance into shadows of the black body which has barely emerged from shadows before it must be reabsorbed, reclaimed, redispersed. Abject within the economy of white hustlerhood, Dorothy Dean impinges upon Paul's existence, stamping it with her vital otherness. Like *Camp, My Hustler* washes out after the abject makes its presence known. Comprehending the abject's power, Warhol, in keeping with Kristeva's Proust, inverts society's lining, exposing a glistening nacreous core.

## Andy Morningstar

In the *Diaries*, Warhol reports an important early foreshadowing of future glamour. Reflecting once again upon the onomastic question, an issue explored by Warhol as well as members of his entourages (for example, the production of a Candy Darling from a James Slattery, of a Holly Woodlawn from a Harold Ajzenberg, or of an Ultra Violet from an Isabelle Dufresne), Warhol offers a glimpse into his earliest glamour imaginings: “No no, I don’t love my name so much. I always wanted to *change* it. When I was little I was going to take ‘Morningstar,’ Andy Morningstar. I thought it was so beautiful. And I came so close to actually using it for my career. This was before the book, *Marjorie Morningstar*. I just liked the name. It was my favorite” (Wednesday, October 3, 1984). Reflecting upon past experiences of dreamed celebrity, Warhol makes the present tense a recapitulation of elapsed glamour impulses while also setting it up as a factory for the production of future fame. In Warhol’s imagination, everybody is a drag queen, every name a pseudonym—the body and name “Andy Warhol” included. Warhol’s will-to-fame catapults him into the limelight of art, fashion, music and cinema systems, places he travels on the low-friction horizontal plane of celebrity. Propagating laterally, fame sustains itself through a rhizomic infiltration of niches and ecosystems.<sup>19</sup> Warhol’s reflections upon himself are the type of contemplation which fashion his body

---

<sup>19</sup> In *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), Deleuze and Guattari distinguish among three botanical models for artistic production: (1) the root, (2) the radicle, and (3) the rhizome. According to their definitions, the classical organic text is rootlike (a homuncular seed produces an adult plant), the chaotic modernist text is radicle-like (multiple secondary shoots are grafted onto a dead primary shoot, causing unity to become aborted) and the schizoid text is rhizome-like (spreading in all directions, it becomes a sort of literary weed, like kudzu). The chapter “Introduction: Rhizome” discusses these points in finer detail (3-25).

and aura into objects of philosophical inquiry. In *Philosophy*, he ponders about what makes him salable: “Some company recently was interested in buying my ‘aura.’ They didn’t want my product. They kept saying, ‘We want your aura.’ I never figured out what they wanted” (77). Audiences which resist his fame—in particular, black people—cause him grief: “Andy noticed that blacks *never* came to his book signings, in any city, including New York. And on the single occasion when an ill-dressed youth said he couldn’t afford to buy a book, Andy bought one for him, and then listed it in his expenses as ‘Book for poor kid—\$7.95’” (Colacello, 311-312). Bottling himself as star product—Coca-Cola, or even the fragrance he toyed with in the sixties, *You’re In*—Warhol distills his essence for mass distribution (as the *Diaries* indicate, to Paris, Milan, Kuwait, Monte Carlo, Iran).<sup>20</sup> Reading Warhol’s words, we encounter a meta-commentary on fame, that mystical entity which, along with money, drives Warhol ever forward into new terrain. Like money, fame is capital; it can be accrued, stored, hoarded, and can even generate interest (the celebrity model represents one such accumulation). Employing that philosophical bugbear, the self-report, Warhol commits his life to the speculation of what it means to transform oneself into a marketable commodity.<sup>21</sup> In this economy, fame fantasies are of major import, as in the “Economics” chapter of *Philosophy*, when Warhol muses: “I have a fantasy about Money: I’m walking down the street and I hear somebody

---

<sup>20</sup> Time Capsule 10 contains two 1967 letters to John D. Goodloe of the Coca-Cola company in Atlanta—in one he requests use of the Coca-Cola bottle for his fragrance, *You’re In*, while in the second he promises to discontinue his use of the bottle. Evidently, Warhol also requested use of the Coca-Cola bottle for a necktie, and was also refused (Time Capsule 39 contains the letter of refusal, also dated 1967).

<sup>21</sup> In *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Richard Rorty examines arguments for and against the philosophical value of the self-report and the “raw feel.” In the chapter “Persons Without Minds,” he couches his discussion in terms of mind-body duality (how information travels from one entity to the other, how we know that either exists, what it means to turn a sensation into a report, etc.) (70-127). The incorrigibility of the raw feel—the indisputable sense that we have experienced something, whether it be hunger, pain, pleasure, distress or some other feeling—poses limitless problems for epistemology. That is, until one dispenses with the idea that the mind must mirror anything exterior to it.

say—in a whisper—“There goes the richest person in the world” (135). That bizarre species of fantasy which finds itself alienated via its full realization, Warhol’s life itself functions as a running commentary on celebrity. Famous for being famous, Warhol bumbles his way into the warm glow of the media machine; his gift to posterity is the fact of his fame, his physical displacement from a terrestrial nowhere to a celestial “up there.”

In his *How to Have a Life-Style*, Quentin Crisp makes the astute assertion that the essence of celebrity involves gross ontology, or the mere fact of being. Condensing all existence into style turns one into a celebrity essence—something whose eminence depends upon its mode of being (just as, for Merleau-Ponty, the flesh modulates being as a style).<sup>22</sup> For Crisp, “making it” involves convincing people to consume you purely on the basis of your existence—an irreducible totality. “Doing” loses ground—soiling, action serves the sole purpose of generating a reputation, after which point all that remains is sheer thereeness:

It is, of course, not merely enough to make sure that the foundations of your home life are solid. You must then decide what you are going to do in the outer world. Some of my readers may be so old-fashioned that they still have jobs. If this is so, they should make every effort not to take work which involves them only with things. These might be called the “making” professions; they should aim to find employment that brings them perpetually into contact with people. They will then be able, during every waking, working hour, to polish their techniques of self-presentation. Work of this nature can be described as a “doing” profession—only one step away from the Profession of Being, to which all true stylists aspire (79)

---

<sup>22</sup> “The flesh is not matter, is not mind, is not substance. To designate it, we should need only the term ‘element,’ in the sense that it was used to speak of water, air, earth, and fire, that is, in the sense of a *general thing*, midway between the spatio-temporal individual and the idea, a sort of incarnate principle that brings a style of being wherever there is a fragment of being” (139). See “The Intertwining—The Chiasm” in his *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968, 130-162).

Autistic, making necessitates contact with only objects and materials—Crisp’s examples include the works of “Mr. Wilde” and “Miss Stein.” Intersubjective, doing forces human-human contact, allowing a personal aesthetic of maintenance and display to develop—golfers and actors take these jobs. Being occupies the apex of Crisp’s triangle, an activity available only to those rare individuals who have found a magical way to transcend all human activity and can fall back on their essence as a form of income (Crisp’s Manhattan celebrity toward the end of his life testifies to this fact).<sup>23</sup> While fabricating and acting provide their subjects with chances to perfect themselves as “stylists,” it is only when one has left behind all human activity for the rarefied non-activity of existing that true celebrity and glamour emerge: “Style is a shield; style is a sword; style is a crown; and style is also an automatic invitation card to the party at the end of the world” (174). Consumed by style, the fame-conscious human being takes as his work the awesome project of occupying space and time and of projecting his essence to the world’s other inhabitants (Crisp refers to this act as the “projection of style”). Taking being as a profession, this creature no longer needs to make or do anything—at this glorious moment, work is the non-work of radiating.

Warhol, too, refines his performance into mere spatiotemporal positioning and projection (for Crisp, style is always a projectile or aerolith). Cramming his being into astral existence, Warhol takes as his ultimate work the production of himself. While so many of Warhol’s public appearances, modeling stints, music video cameos and TV

---

<sup>23</sup> See Crisp’s *Resident Alien: The New York Diaries* (Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 1996) for the best description of Crisp’s New York City celebrity. Jonathan Nossiter’s 1990 film *Resident Alien* also provides visual proof of Crisp’s status as having acceded to the Profession of Being. An expatriated waif blowing in the wind, Crisp flits from one situation to another, making his essence amenable to the workings of social collage.

advertisements present his essence or aura for consumption, his October 12, 1985 spot on *The Love Boat* makes the point most vividly. Arranging for him to portray Andy *qua* Andy, Aaron Spelling's writers generate a script which could easily have been taken from *POPism*. Warhol explains the story of his particular episode in the March 20, 1985 entry of his *Diaries*: "So then I was working on the Joan Collins portrait and on some other stuff, and then a big four-page telegram came from *The Love Boat* saying that they wanted to show all my art on *The Love Boat*, too. The story is that I go on *The Love Boat* and there's a girl on the boat named Mary with her husband, and she used to be 'Marina Del Rey.' And I just have a few lines, something like 'Hello, Mary.' But one of the lines I have to say is something like 'Art is class commercialism,' which I don't want to say" (633). Cast in the episode as Mary Hammond/Marina Del Rey, *Happy Days*' Marion Ross toys with her status as maternal icon; finally a model citizen (she has married a political star portrayed by her *Happy Days* co-star Tom Bosley), she has no idea that being welcomed aboard the Pacific Princess will make inevitable a confrontation with a phantasmic past self which has refused metempsychotic dissipation.<sup>24</sup> Having starred naked in Underground 60s film *The Green Giraffe*, Mary Hammond suddenly finds her life concatenating around her; returning to haunt her present, Marina Del Rey is a sixties spectre which has found itself hideously resuscitated. Playing himself, Warhol is flanked by a telltale entourage, this time starring Raymond St. Jacques as a genderbending escort and black queen: "PH came by about 2:00 and we went into the makeup room and she

---

<sup>24</sup> David LaChapelle's photograph *TV Moms* (1995) testifies to Marion Ross' status as eminent maternal presence. Posing with Florence Henderson, Shirley Jones, Esther Rolle, Barbara Billingsley, June Lockhart and Jane Wyatt, Ross confirms her *madonna* fame through LaChapelle's lens. Using *Love Boat*'s Warhol episode to reconfigure her maternity, Ross makes Andy the occasion to play with her TV reputation of the sort confirmed by LaChapelle. LaChapelle's photograph is reprinted in *LaChapelleland* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996, 34-35).

opened up her mouth and said, 'So who's playing your drag queen?' and Raymond St. Jacques whirled around in his chair and gave her a withering look and said, 'It's *not* a drag queen.' And there he was with lipstick on and everything, and in the original script it had *called* the role a drag queen" (Monday, April 1, 1985). Presenting Warhol as venue for sexual, gender, racial and artistic alterity, the writers of Episode 233 do what *Love Boat* writers do best: process Hollywood and New York for usable distillates.

Warhol's *Love Boat* episode positions his painting in immediate proximity with the larger world of TV celebrities, all of whom finally share his environment: "We went over to a studio across from the Formosa Restaurant, they shoot Doug Cramer's TV show *Dynasty* there. The *Love Boat* writers are working on my episode which is going to film on March thirtieth and I started to get scared. I don't know if I can go through with it. The guy was really gay. And Joan Collins got done shooting and I said hi, and she said I still owed her a painting. She was great. And Ali McGraw waved. There were like 500 people there working. And it's directed by Curtis Harrington who was an underground filmmaker in the sixties who did voodoo kind of stuff, and now he's doing this" (Thursday, January 3, 1985). Making use of discarded artists from the sixties, *The Love Boat* not only recycles washed-up screen and film stars, but also finds a way to make art failures useful. Like Iran's Hoveyda, Chris Harrington, too, represents an art weirdo who has acceded to an alternate position of power from which he is able to assist Warhol at disseminating his image to new markets. Situated next door to Joan Collins, Warhol enters into a new social collage in which his dual status as TV star and art star mingle with Joan Collins' status as bitch-of-the-minute (her role as Alexis Carrington knew no parallel in terms of her fashionability, vindictiveness and nastiness). Owing Joan an

image of Joan, Warhol the portraitist crystallizes in the midst of Warhol the actor. Proof of Warhol's celebrity comes in the form of his relationship with Joan, who not only has commissioned work of him, but also shoots her scenes in the vicinity of where he shoots his: their sites of production adjoin. In this milieu, even an actress like *Dynasty's* Catherine Oxenberg, who plays Joan Collins' daughter, Amanda Carrington, appears as one more hysterical actress in a stream of many: "And then we went over to the *Dynasty* soundstage and tried to see Catherine Oxenberg but she said she was in an accident and was crying and didn't want to see us. I don't know. I bet she just had a fight with her boyfriend" (*Diaries*, Friday, March 29, 1985). Knowing the dirt on an insider like Catherine Oxenberg marks Warhol as interior to a media machine he has been able to permeate successfully.

In *Andy Warhol's Party Book*, Warhol describes the parties to which his *Love Boat* gig facilitated *entrée*. Warhol places reports of his *Love Boat* fête in a chapter entitled "Out-of-Town Parties" (other species of parties include Club Parties, "Paid Parties in Public Places," Celebrity Parties and the celebratory lump "Wedding(s), Funerals, Art Openings, Charities, Etc.>"). Focused primarily on Los Angeles parties, Las Vegas parties and Baltimore parties, this chapter provides a geographically suited etiquette of partygoing and a record of Warhol's whereabouts in his domestic celebrity wanderings. In his L.A. stint, two major parties occupy Warhol's time and attention: Swifty and Mary Lazar's Academy Awards party at Spago, and the *Love Boat's* Thousandth Passenger party for Lana Turner (true to form, Warhol had been the 999<sup>th</sup>). Finally Los Angeles has embraced Warhol; legitimized, his offness no longer presents aesthetic danger (by this point in time, even Cher has changed her mind about Warhol's

status, as testified to by her invitation of Keith Haring and Andy Warhol to a barbecue at her Malibu complex).<sup>25</sup> Of these two events, the *Love Boat* party delights Warhol the most: “The *Love Boat* party was everything I’d hoped it would be—every star from Joan Collins to Fred Travalena, from Englebert Humperdinck to Joanne Worley. Roddy McDowall and Troy Donahue were at our table. Ginger Rogers and Mary Martin were across from us...It was all just great, a thrill a minute. Lots of favorites you worried might be dead by then, but there they were, still looking great” (108-109). Through the party’s guest list, previous Warhol paintings and movies come to life. His 1962 diptych *Troy Donahue* finds itself suddenly transformed into the (ex)-hunk’s physical presence at Warhol’s table, while Lana Turner, whose life had been played with in the 1965 film *More Milk Yvette*, crystallizes as celebrity incarnate. Warhol misses her *Love Boat* eminence by only one mere digit—he is closer to her than ever. Functioning as a cultural mortuary, *The Love Boat* becomes a receptacle in which residues of celebrity are collected. In fact, the evening’s “shockaroo” comes when Aaron Spelling arranges for there to be a salute to expired passengers in the form of a clip sequence: “It was like you were seeing the Curse of the Love Boat—Richard Basehart, John Blondell, James Broderick, Judy Canova, Jan Clayton, Hans Conried, Bob Crane, Richard Deacon, Janet Gaynor, Will Geer, Arthur Godfrey, John Hackett, Patsy Kelly, Fernando Lamas, Peter Lawford, Ethel Merman, Slim Pickens, Walter Slezak—just on and on. It seemed like forever, although it probably wasn’t more than thirty—which isn’t too bad out of a thousand guest stars—but just seeing them all together, people you’d forgotten had died,

---

<sup>25</sup> “...Keith Haring was talking about some art things with Cher, and she gave him two phone numbers and said for him to call her the next day. Keith and I were both staying at the same hotel; we were having lunch by the pool. Keith went away to call Cher and when he came back he said that a recording had come on and said, ‘We’re staying home this afternoon having a barbecue, and if you have this number it’s probably okay to just drop in’” (109).

even, had its impact. It got me wondering how much more time I had left” (109).

Disclosing itself as cemetery, *The Love Boat* collects Warhol as one more star essence in his penultimate year. Imagining himself a Spelling clip documenting his life as having grown physiologically obsolete, Warhol is correct to place himself at such a biophysical chasm.

Despite the fact that the Academy Awards and *Love Boat* parties present Warhol with the opportunity to meet other eminent beings, he makes certain to include the spicy self-reports of “the kids” for extra flavor. One photograph caption reads “Andy with camera, Robert Guillaume, Alexis Smith, June Allyson, Loretta Swit, Ginger Rogers, Doug Cramer, Lana Turner, Aaron Spelling, Mary Martin, Michele Lee, Cloris Leachman, Tom Bosley, and Carol Channing,” testifying to Warhol’s inclusion in a social panorama which seems to embody Proust’s “peepshow of the years” in all its gerontophobic nausea (114). Still, what piques Warhol’s curiosity most in his L.A. travels is the presence of “Reed,” a Hollywood kid who Warhol meets not in Los Angeles, but in New York City: “When you’re walking down streets like Sunset or Santa Monica Boulevards, there are lots of vending machines with different sex newspapers inside, and the papers always look like they’ve been sitting there forever, but you don’t personally know anyone who puts ads in them or even buys them. Well, one night I was sitting in a bar on Mulberry and Spring Streets in New York with screenwriter Peter Koper, his wife, Gina, and two artists, Nick Ghiz and Joe Lewis, a young kid from L.A. named Reed sat down and told us how he’d lost his virginity at a swingers-type orgy in the Hollywood Hills” (116). Like so many other of Warhol’s confidantes, Reed provided the eager voyeur with a horrible story of corporeal and psychological humiliation. As

Marty, a disco fatality in a “Let’s Boogie” T-shirt, ushers Reed into what will become a chamber of abjection, Reed encounters aesthetic and sexual surprises: “But here it was in front of me—and a heavy scene, too. The place was adorned in plastic palm trees and plastic fruits, and everybody was walking around in lingerie. Old, old women. I mean sixty years old, some of them” (116). Impotent at the sight of aging flesh., Reed pulls himself together enough to achieve orgasm with another random guest Dana while Reed’s girlfriend Maria gets busy with Marty—all in the same bed, a sexual diptych. The sex soon passes from unsatisfactory to vile: “I never felt a thing. It was a blur. I didn’t feel myself come or anything: I just knew it was finished. Then I rolled over and acted wiped out—although I had barely moved. Then Maria comes over to me, smiling, and spits Marty all over my face. I was repulsed beyond all imagination. I jumped up and ran across the house naked. I didn’t care anymore. Horrible. What a way to lose it, you know” (119). Stealing the show, Reed produces the chapter’s center of gravity. Even in the heart of Hollywood glamour the penumbra of the abject makes its presence known.

All things considered, nothing better represents Warhol’s success at atomizing his presence than his *Love Boat* appearance, an event with its own satellite parties and personalities. That Warhol is able to make it into the *Love Boat* archive proves that his project has achieved a more than satisfactory completion. TDK and Diet Coke television commercials testify to the visual appeal of Warhol’s grotesqueness, yet do not speak as vociferously about his status as pop-culture icon. Similarly, incursions into the field of modeling comment upon Warhol’s relation to chicness, yet do not position him within the low-brow grid of the everyday. What *The Love Boat* offers that other venues (for example, MTV) cannot is a certain schmaltz factor, a constitutive cheesiness and kitsch

value. As trash repository, Aaron Spelling's masterpiece recirculates and recycles has-beens to the effect that it becomes something of a glue factory for expiring thoroughbreds. Popular entertainment—I can remember my own Saturday nights being wrapped up in overnight visits to Aunt Angie's and Uncle Winkie's for viewings of *The Love Boat* and its temporal neighbor, *Fantasy Island*—*The Love Boat* is truly the worst of the worst. Pleasurable yet Godawful, it is the perfect place for Warhol to land. Playing himself within the charmed rectangle of the boob tube, he becomes elevated to the dubious status of Aaron Spelling spectacle. His presence in the Cars' *Hello Again* (1984) or Curiosity Killed the Cat's *Misfit* (1986) videos still present him as framed by the higher discourse of a musical avant-garde. His public-access TV show *Andy Warhol's TV* (1982) and his MTV project *Andy Warhol's Fifteen Minutes* (1986) still place him on a cutting edge. *The Love Boat* does no such thing. Using his bizarreness as commodity, it makes Warhol into an entertaining joke for the Saturday-night viewing pleasure of the masses. *Après-garde*, Warhol condenses into finitude: *The Love Boat* guarantees that he, too, will die.

## /sources

### Books

- Abrams, M.H., editor. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature, Volume 2*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1993.
- Adorno, Theodor. *Negative Dialectics*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Horkheimer, Max. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Trans. John Cumming. New York: Continuum, 1999.
- Alexander, Meena. *The Poetic Self: Towards a Phenomenology of Romanticism*. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Fault Lines: A Memoir*. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1993.
- Allen, Donald. *The New American Poetry*. New York: Grove Press, 1960.
- Als, Hilton. *The Women*. New York: Noonday Press, 1996.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. San Diego: Harcourt, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *On Revolution*. London: Penguin Books, 1990.
- Aristotle. *Poetics*. Trans. Francis Ferguson. New York: Hill and Wang, 1991.
- Artaud, Antonin. *Selected Writings*. Berkeley: University of California, 1988.
- Ashfield and de Bolla, eds. *The Sublime: A Reader in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Theory*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas, 1982.
- Barasch, Frances K. *The Grotesque: A Study in Meanings*. Mouton: The Hague, 1971.
- Barthes, Roland. *Sade/Fourier/Loyola*. Trans. Richard Miller. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.
- Baudelaire, Charles. *Flowers of Evil*. Trans. Jackson and Marthiel Mathews. New

- York: New Directions, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Paris Spleen*. Trans. Louise Varèse. New York: New Directions, 1970.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *America*. Trans. Chris Turner. London: Verso, 1989.
- Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations*. Trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968.
- Berger, Maurice. *Adrian Piper a Retrospective*. Baltimore: University of Maryland, 2000.
- Blake, William. *Complete Poetry of William Blake*. Ed. David C. Erdman. New York: Anchor Books, 1988.
- Bockris, Victor. *The Life and Death of Andy Warhol*. New York: Bantam Books, 1989.
- Boileau, Nicolas. *Œuvres Complètes*. Paris: French and European Publications, 1966.
- Bourbaki, Nicolas. *Elements of Mathematics, Vol. 3: Theory of Sets*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1968.
- Bourden, David. *Warhol*. New York: Abradale Press, 1989.
- Breton, André. *Manifestoes of Surrealism*. Trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972.
- Briggs, John P., and Peat, F. David. *Looking Glass Universe: The Emerging Science of Wholeness*. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1984.
- Bockris, Victor. *The Life and Death of Andy Warhol*. New York: Bantam Books, 1989.
- Bracken, Len. *Guy Debord: Revolutionary*. Venice, CA: Feral House, 1997.
- Bürger, Peter. *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Trans. Michael Shaw. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Butler, Judith and Scott, Joan W. *Feminists Theorize the Political*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

- Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Cher. *The First Time*. New York: Pocket Books, 1998.
- Colacello, Bob. *Holy Terror: Andy Warhol Close Up*. New York: Cooper Square Press, 1990.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria*. London: J.M. Dent, 1997.
- County, Jayne. *Man Enough to be a Woman*. London: Serpent's Tail, 1995.
- Crisp, Quentin. *How to Become a Virgin*. London: Flamingo, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Resident Alien: The New York Diaries*. Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Naked Civil Servant*. New York: Penguin Books, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *How to Have a Life-style*. Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 1997.
- Danto, Arthur. *Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The State of the Art*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Encounters and Reflections*. New York: Noonday Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Beyond the Brillo Box: The Visual Arts in Post-historical Perspective*. New York: Noonday Press, 1992.
- Darling, Candy. *My Face for the World to See*. Honolulu: Handy Marks Publications, 1997.
- Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. New York: Zone Books, 1995.
- de Certeau, Michel. *Herterologies: Discourse on the Other*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

- De Duve, Thierry. *Kant after Duchamp*. Boston: MIT Press, 1996.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari, Felix. . *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Helen R. Lane. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.
- de Quincey, Thomas. *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*. London: Penguin, 1986.
- de Stael, Germaine. *Major Writings of Germaine de Stael*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992.
- Dewey, John. *Art and Experience*. New York: Perigree Books, 1980.
- Doyle, Jennifer, Jonathan Flatley and José Esteban Muñoz, Eds. *Pop Out: Queer Warhol*. Durham, Duke University Press, 1996.
- Duchamp, Marcel. *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1989.
- DuPlessis, Rachel. *Drafts*. Elmwood, CT: Potes and Poets Press, 1991.
- Francis, Mark and King, Margery. *The Warhol Look: Glamour, Style, Fashion*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1997.
- Fried, Stephen. *Beautiful Thing: The Tragedy of Supermodel Gia*. New York: Pocket Books, 1993.
- Freud, Sigmund. *The Ego and the Id*. Trans. James Strachey. W.W. Norton & Company, 1962.
- Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Gilpin, William. *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; And On Sketching Landscape: To Which Is Added a Poem on Landscape Painting*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.
- Glossner, Barry. *The Culture of Fear*. New York: Basic books, 1999.
- Greenblatt, Stephen Jay. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981.

- Greenberg, Clement. *Art and Culture*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1978.
- Greene, Brian. *The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and The Quest for the Ultimate Theory*. New York: Vintage Books, 1999.
- Gribbin, John. *In Search of Schrödinger's Cat: Quantum Physics and Reality*. Toronto: Bantam Books, 1984.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Trans. Frederick G. Lawrence. Boston: MIT Press, 1990.
- Haden-Guest, Anthony. *The Last Party: Studio 54, Disco, and the Culture of the Night*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1997.
- Haraway, Donna J. *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium.FemaleMan<sup>©</sup>\_Meets\_OncoMouse<sup>TM</sup>*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Hawking, Steven. *A Brief History of Time*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and time: A Translation of Sein and Zeit*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. Albany: SUNY Press, 1996.
- Hegel, George Wilhelm Friedrich. *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Trans. T.M. Knox. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*. Trans. T.M. Knox. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Trans. A.V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*. Trans. Bernard Bosanquet. New York: Penguin, 1993.
- hooks, bell. *Black Looks*. Boston: South End Press, 1992.
- Husserl, Edmund. *Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness*. Trans. James S. Churchill. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969.
- Irwin, William. *Seinfeld and Philosophy: A Book about Everything and Nothing*.

- Chicago: Open Court, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Simpsons and Philosophy: The D'Oh of Homer*. Chicago: Open Court, 2001.
- Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1992.
- Jarvis, Brian. *Postmodern Cartographies: The Geographical Imagination in Contemporary American Culture*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998.
- Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Judgment*. Trans. James Creed Meredith. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. Lewis White Beck. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995.
- Kayser, Wolfgang Johannes. *The Grottesque in Art and Literature*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.
- Keats, John. *John Keats*. Ed. Frank Kermode. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Kenner, Hugh. *The Pound Era*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *Either/Or: A Fragment of Life*. Trans. Alastair Hannay. London: Penguin books, 1992.
- Koch, Stephen. *Stargazer: The Life, World and Films of Andy Warhol*. New York: Marion Boyars, 1991.
- Koestenbaum, Wayne. *Jackie Under My Skin: Interpreting an Icon*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Andy Warhol: A Penguin Life*. New York: Viking Press, 2001.
- Koons, Jeff. *The Jeff Koons Handbook*. New York: Rizzoli, 1992.
- Kostabi, Mark. *Kostabi: The Early Years*. New York: Kostabi World, 1990.
- Kramer, Margie. *Andy Warhol Et Al: The FBI File on Andy Warhol*. New York: Unsub Press, 1988.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

- LaChapelle, David. *LaChapelleland*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- Longinus. *On Great Writing (On the Sublime)*. Trans. G.M.A. Grube. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1957.
- Liotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime*. Trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.
- Madonna. *Mr. Peabody's Apples*. New York: Callaway, 2003.
- Malanga, Gerard. *Chic Death*. Cambridge: Pym Randall Press, 1971.
- Mandel, Ernest. *Late Capitalism*. London: Verso, 1999.
- Mandelbrot, Benoit. *The Fractal Geometry of Nature*. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1982.
- Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1972.
- Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich. *The German Ideology*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998.
- Maturana, Humberto and Varela, Francisco. *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living*. Boston: D. Reidel, 1991.
- McGann, Jerome. *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *The Prose of the World*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Visible and the Invisible*. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Trans. Paul Kegan. London: Routledge Classics, 2002.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.
- O'Connor, John and Liu, Benjamin. *Unseen Warhol*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1996.

- O'Hara, Frank. *Selected Poems of Frank O'Hara*. New York: Vintage Books, 1974.
- Paglia, Camille. *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson*. New York: Vintage Books, 1991.
- Plato. *Great Dialogues of Plato (Ion, Meno, Republic, Theaetetus, Symposium, Phaedo)*. Trans. W.H.D. Rouse. New York: Mentor Books, 1954.
- Proust, Marcel. *Remembrance of Things Past, Volume 1 (Swann's Way, Within a Budding Grove)*. Trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin. New York: Vintage Books, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Remembrance of Things Past, Volume 2 (The Guermites Way, Cities of the Plain)*. Trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin. New York: Vintage Books, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Remembrance of Things Past, Volume 3 (The Captive, The Fugitive, Time Regained)*. Trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin. New York: Vintage Books, 1982.
- Rabanne, Paco. *Paco Rabanne*. Marseille: Musée de la Mode, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Journey*. Rockport: Element Books, 1997.
- Ronell, Avital. *Stupidity*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Crack Wars: Literature Addiction Mania*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004.
- Rorty, Richard. *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Ross, Andrew. *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1989.
- Sacher-Masoch, Leopold von. *Venus in Furs*. Trans. Joachim Neugroschel. New York: Penguin Classics, 2000.
- St. James, James. *Disco Bloodbath*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999.
- Salecl, Renata. *The Spoils of Freedom: Psychoanalysis and Feminism After the Fall*

- of Socialism*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Nausea*. Trans. Robert Baldick. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenal Essay on Ontology*. Trans. Hazel E. Barnes. New York: Washington Square Press, 1992.
- Schiller, Friedrich. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: In a Series of Letters*. Trans. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L.A. Willoughby. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.
- Schlegel, Friedrich. *Dialogue on Poetry and Literary Aphorisms*. Trans. Ernst Behler and Roman Struc. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968.
- Schnabel, Julian. *Julian Schnabel*. New York: Henry N. Abrams, 2003.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky and Frank, Adam, Editors. *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1995.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996.
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe. *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*. Ed. Donald H. Reiman and Sharon B. Powers. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1977.
- Sherman, Cindy. *Cindy Sherman: Film Stills*. New York: MOMA, 2003.
- Shusterman, Richard. *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.
- Signorile, Michelangelo. *Life Outside: The Signorile Report on Gay Men: Sex, Drugs, Muscles, and the Passages of Life*. New York: HarperCollins, 1997.
- Solanas, Valerie. *SCUM Manifesto*. AK Press, 1996.
- Sontag, Susan. *Against Interpretation*. New York: Anchor Books, 1986.
- Stein, Jean. *Edie: An American Biography*. New York: Dell, 1982.
- Summers, Barbara. *Skin Deep: Inside the World of Black Fashion Models*. New York: Amistad Press, 1998.
- Tabbi, Joseph. *Postmodern Sublime: Technology and American writing from Mailer*

- to *Cyberpunk*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- Taschen, Benedikt. *Pierre et Gilles*. Germany: Benedikt Taschen, 1993.
- Traig, Jennifer and Victoria. *Judaikitsch: Tchotchkes, Schmattesm and Nosherei*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002.
- Ultra Violet. *Famous for 15 Minutes: My Years with Andy Warhol*. New York: Avon Books, 1990.
- Venturi, Robert, Scott Brown, Denise and Izenour, Steven. *Learning from Las Vegas*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988.
- Wallace, Michele. *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*. London: Verso, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Invisibility Blues: From Pop to Theory*. London: Verso, 1990.
- Ward, Geoff. *Statutes of Liberty: The NY School of Poets*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.
- Warhol, Andy. *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *a, a novel*. New York: Grove Press, 1998.
- Warhol, Andy and Hackett, Pat. *POPism: The Warhol Sixties*. New York: Harcourt Brace Johanovich, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Andy Warhol's Party Book*. New York: Crown Publishing, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Warhol Diaries*. New York: Warner Books, 1989.
- Watson, Steven. *Factory Made: Warhol and the Sixties*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2003.
- Weingartner, Fannia. *The Andy Warhol Museum*. Pittsburgh: The Andy Warhol Museum, 1994.
- Wilde, Oscar. *De Profundis and Other Writings*. New York: Penguin Books, 1982.
- Wolf, Reva. *Andy Warhol, Poetry and Gossip in the 1960s*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.
- Woodlawn, Holly, with Copeland, Jeff. *A Low Life in High Heels*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.

Wordsworth, William. *William Wordsworth*. Ed. Stephen Gill. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Woronov, Mary. *Swimming Underground: My Years in the Warhol Factory*. Boston: Journey Editions, 1995.

Yingling, Thomas E. *Hart Crane and the Homosexual Text: New Thresholds, New Anatomies*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990.

Žižek, Slavoj. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. London: Verso, 1989.

### Essays and Articles

“Advertising: Schrafft’s Gets with It.” *Time*: October 25, 1968. Time Capsule 7.

Bowman, Sally. [Untitled.] *The NY Times Book Review*: January 12, 1969, 4. Time Capsule 1.

Carroll, Virginia, Scott Brown, Denise and Venturi, Robert. “Levittown et après.” *L’architecture d’aujourd’hui*: August-September 1972 (#163): 38-42.

Derrida, Jacques. “Economimesis.” *Diacritics*: June 1991, 1-25.

Dillenberger, Jane Daggett. “Jesus as Pop Icon.” *Bible Review*: October 1996, 22-54.

Frizelle. “Fatty Acid.” *WWD*: July 16, 1971. Time Capsule 7.

Foster, Mike. “Gay Aliens Found in UFO Wreck!” *Weekly World News*: June 14, 2004, 16-18.

*L.A. Herald Examiner*: November 17, 1968. [Untitled; review of *a*]. Time Capsule 7.

Leroy, John. “Feeling Horny? Take a Tape Recorder to Bed.” *Gay*: September 14, 1970, 11. Time Capsule -10.

“Pop Goes the Easel.” *Greater Philadelphia*: November 1965, 156-157. Time Capsule -17.

“Skinny the Only In Thing? Fat Chance.” *L.A. Times*: July 1, 1971. Time Capsule 7.

“The Status Shirt Put On.” *Look*. November 12, 1968. Time Capsule -12.

Tata, Michael Angelo. "Post-Proustian Glamour." *Rhizomes 5: Objects and Their Subjects*: Fall 2002.

### Letters

Letter from Gerard Malanga to Andy Warhol, 1966. Time Capsule -12.

Letter from William Pruett (Coca-Cola) to Eugene M. Schwartz, February 27, 1967.  
Time Capsule 39.

Letter from The Coca-Cola Company to Andy Warhol, June 17, 1967. Time Capsule  
10.

Letter from Valerie Solanas to Andy Warhol, December 1968. Time Capsule 3.

Letter from "Lance" to Andy Warhol. Time Capsule -17.

Christmas card from Dorothy Dean to Andy Warhol, 1969. Time Capsule 10.

Letter from "Maggie" to Andy Warhol, June 6, 1969. Time Capsule 10.

Envelope from Marie Mencken to Andy Warhol. Time Capsule -17.

### Films

Bailey, Fenton and Barbato, Randy. *Party Monster—The Shockumentary*. Picture  
This!, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Party Monster*. Twentieth Century Fox, 1999.

Freemont, Vincent and Shelly Dunn. *Pie in the Sky—The Brigid Berlin Story*. New  
Video, 2001.

Heckerling, Amy. *Clueless*. Paramount, 1995.

Johnson, Jed. *Bad*, 1976.

Lee, Iara. *Synthetic Pleasures*. Caipirinha Productions, 1996.

Livingston, Jennie. *Paris Is Burning*. Prestige, 1991.

Morrissey, Paul. *Flesh*, 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Trash*, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Heat*, 1972.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Women in Revolt*, 1972.

- Nossiter, Jonathan. *Resident Alien*. Cinevista, 1990.
- Preminger, Otto. *Skidoo*, 1968.
- Schnabel, Julian. *Basquiat*. Miramax, 1996.
- Warhol, Andy. *Screen Test, Reel #11*, 1963-1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Kiss*, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sleep*, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Eat*, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Blow-Job*, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Haircut*, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Tarzan and Jane Regained...Sort of*, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Empire*, 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Screen Test, Reel #2*, 1964-1965
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Couch*, 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Vinyl*, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Horse*, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *More Milk Yvette*, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Afternoon*, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Camp*, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *My Hustler*, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Chelsea Girls*, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Loves of Ondine*, 1967.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lonesome Cowboys*, 1967.
- Waters, John. *Female Trouble*. New Line Cinema, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Pecker*. New Line Cinema, 1998.
- Weisman, David. *Ciao! Manhattan*. Plexifilm, 1972.
- Workman, Chuck. *Superstar: The Life and Times of Andy Warhol*. Shout! Factory, 1990.

#### Video/TV

*Andy Warhol's TV*. 1982.

*Andy Warhol's Fifteen Minutes.* MTV, 1986.

*The Anna Nicole Show.* E!, 2001-2003.

*Factory Diaries: 1965-1979.*

"Hello Again." The Cars. 1986.

*The Love Boat.* October 12, 1985.

Makos, Christopher. *Andy Warhol in Drag.* 1981.

*Saturday Night Live.* October 3, 1981.

"Misfit." Curiosity Killed the Cat. 1986.

*Superstar USA.* Warner Brothers, 2004.

*The Whole Warhol.* Bravo, 2002.