Andy Warhol: Marginalization, Childhood Illness and Performativity in Portraiture

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Andy Warhol's career was marked by stories. Namely, narratives made up by the artist in order to deflect the truth.[1] Warhol and his works embody cold, lifeless mechanization. While Warhol was largely producing much of his corpus during the space age and the advent of modern technology, there is something more ominous than industrialization at large in his work. He created a persona apart from himself for the public. In order to understand Warhol and the man beneath the haze of his performative identity, his biography must be taken into careful consideration. His biography, in conjunction with a psychoanalytic approach, serves as background for how and why he developed certain stylistic leanings. Particularly, his incidences of childhood illness may shed light on many of the setbacks Warhol encountered. The traumas of his biography are most glaring in his treatment of portraiture; a genre that, he repeated throughout his oeuvre. Illness, in particularly those experienced during childhood can be damaging. In addition to a history of childhood illness, Warhol lived a life marked by turbulence. Some prevailing concerns from Warhol's past include: his homosexuality, his body image and his interaction with mass tragedies of the Post-modern era. The manner by which he addressed turmoil in his life is a telling clue, regarding the treatment of his illness. St. Vitus Dance, the ailment he suffered as a child is a largely inconspicuous aspect of his identity. Portraiture is genre by which he most clearly interacts with personal matters. Warhol articulates the ghosts of his past in his mistreatment of portraiture and its repetition.

In his introduction to *Andy Warhol: A Retrospective*, Kynaston McShine argues that Warhol was preordained for a life on the margins due in part to his Carapatho-Rusyn (Ruthenian), Catholic background.[2] His immigrant, working class family could not be any more different than the "beautiful" people he captured on canvas in later years. Even at a young age, Warhol seemed to embody the notion of an outsider in his persona.

Warhol's Marginalized Identity

Warhol was born in 1928 to a Pittsburgh mining family. The Rusyn or Ruthenian people are an ethnic sub-group who lived in the state of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Germany, and Ukraine. This group now lives mainly within the modern geographic boundaries of Ukraine. They, however, did not adopt a Ukrainian identity. The Warhola family emigrated from a Slovakian region populated by Rusyns.[3]

While this could have been an aspect of his identity that caused him to feel as if he were an outsider, he normalized this. The area where he grew up had a very large Central and Eastern European population. His neighborhood in Pittsburgh was known as "Ruska Dolina" or the Rusyn Valley.

Warhol made note of this in his own book, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*. He noted tremendous difficultly making human connections. While it is dubious whether the insights in Warhol's book are indeed truthful, there is likely some level of honesty in his words. He recounted a childhood memory of his mother reading him comics in Rusyn-accented English and begrudgingly saying "Thanks Mom" when she had finished.[4] He held some resentment, particularly for his mother's immigrant status. Despite this, Warhol maintained a strong relationship with his mother throughout his life. This relationship to his mother and comics was memorialized in his work, Dick Tracy (Fig. 1).[5] He spent more time with his mother and his comics than with his peers. It remains distressing that during Warhol's childhood, and life, he never felt he made any true friends. [6] In his article for *Arts Magazine*, "The Metaphysical Nose Job," Bradford Collins also remarks on the nature of Warhol's youthful social interactions. Collins goes on to note that his search for friendship lead to a desire for Warhol to be freed from troubles of the human heart.[7] He also takes stock of the fact that Warhol voiced profound feelings of isolation.[8] Comic books, however, served not only as a point of discomfort, as his interactions with his mother could suggest but, also a point of satisfaction. He notes taking refuge in comics during his bouts of illness and isolation.[9] His emotional vulnerability runs deep; which was escalated by instances of childhood illness. Warhol records coming down with three bouts of what he calls "madness" between the ages of eight and ten. This "madness" was St. Vitus Dance.

Childhood Illness

St. Vitus Dance (Sydenham Chorea) is a side effect of Rheumatic Fever. This disease is marked by palsy in the extremities and sometimes the face. The result is a major loss of bodily control, thus rendering the body unreliable. He describes the lack of control best when he notes his inability to hold chalk steady, so that he could write in class.[10] This disease usually resolves, but in some cases, it can be recurrent, as it presented in Warhol. [11] An additional symptom Warhol experienced was hair loss.[12] St. Vitus' Dance presents similarly to disorders such as stroke. This is undoubtedly a traumatic illness, one that creates a sense of difference and disorder in the patient. What is remarkable about this illness is despite its tragic qualities, it has gained little attention within Warhol literature, which usually cites it as an example of his fragility. Perhaps it was more damaging to Warhol's psyche than previously suggested. This essay posits the lasting and damaging bond to his body this created

Warhol's relationship to his body continued to ebb and flow well into his adult years. This tenuous relationship was augmented by notable life events such as the death of his mother Julia and later the attack on his life by Valerie Solanas.[13] He was afraid of death and as such, attempted to live in a mechanical, empty fashion.

Homosexuality

Warhol's childhood cannot be discussed without considering a dominant source of alienation in his life, his homosexuality. This aspect of his identity could certainly be linked to the issues regarding friends. His homosexuality was a source of difference. Many sources note that Warhol overplayed his homosexuality, to his benefit. Edward D. Powers suggests that he used his played-up identity to create a shield and control the flow of personal information. He did this on a basis of overstating the obvious in order to avert attention from more personal details.[14] His sexuality was put on display for the public so it would not raise questions. Gavin Butt suggests that he added flamboyance to his gay identity so as to play to the media and set himself apart from "serious painters" such as Robert Rauschenberg or Jackson Pollock.[15] In combination, this provides a vantage point by which Warhol and his identity were shaped by alienation and abjection. A prime example of this behavior occurred in an interview with Glen O'Brien where he notes that his first work of art was a paper doll.[16] It is a particularly

Figure 1. Andy Warhol, *Dick Tracy*, 1961 Casein and Crayon on canvas.

Figure 2. Andy Warhol, *Nosepicker I: Why Pick on Me* (originally titled *The Lord Gave Me My Face but I Can Pick My Own Nose*), 1948 Tempera on board.

clear example of his close manipulation of masculinity to highlight the obvious and hide deeper traumas.

Reva Wolf asserts a more mature pronouncement of the foolish flamboyance he projected to the public. While Warhol was quietly involved in the New York poetry scene, he never showed this aspect to the public. Publicly he wrote, "Blue Butterfly Day" that established the same childish triteness consistent with his public image[17]. Warhol appropriated effeminate fluff into his body of work in order to craft his image. The appearance he chose to undertake was superficial and left little room for interpretation. This lack of interpretation allowed him to create a shield to protect his vulnerabilities.

Portraiture and Identity

Warhol would carry this sense of difference perhaps brought on by illness and childhood strife through the rest of his career. He received his training at Carnegie Institute of Technology. It is here that he undertook a genre that would span his entire career: portraiture. One of his earliest self-portraits was created while he was still a student at Carnegie. "The Lord Gave Me My Face, but I Can Pick My Own Nose" [18](1949) is one of his

earliest self-portraits (Fig. 2). While it is shrouded in tongue-in-cheek humor, this piece certainly underscores his lack of self-esteem and discomfort with his appearance. He creates a visual pun surrounding the idea of 'picking' to articulate his concerns.

Powers explains the various levels of 'picking' in the image. There is the first level in which the finger picks at the nose, but there is also the second level where he was picked-on and attacked for his appearance. It seems highly likely that peers would have harassed Warhol for his illness as well as his appearance. It is noted that Warhol was called 'Andy the Red Nosed Warhola' by classmates due to acne and rosacea outbreaks.[19] If such benign maladies were cause for scorn, his abject illness likely elicited a negative response. Powers also offers a third level of meaning in the context of a later work "Before and After I" (Fig. 3) where Warhol literally picks out a new nose.[20] His desire for a new nose is also linked to his ambition to distance himself from his identity as the child of Eastern European immigrants. His nose was a visual signifier of his difference. These behaviors are also indicative of his change in last name from Warhola to Warhol during his teen years. Peter Gay suggests, that Warhol found it more "euphonious,"[21] but perhaps it was just more American sounding and less vilifying. This image is suggestive of both his career as a commercial illustrator and his Pop career.

This eventually evolved to what he is best known for, Pop Art. His creation of "Dick Tracy" (Fig.1) serves as a precedent to the development of his career from illustrating commodities to making an illustration a commodity. Bradford Collins notes that in Warhol's early career he tended toward drawing homoerotic hunks but as his career progressed, he moved toward more commonly accepted manly men. The square-jawed Dick Tracy is a prime example of this appeal to the masses.[22] It was through purposeful appeal to the multitude, Warhol shaped his personality and an art movement.

The goal of Pop Art from his perspective is to negate connoisseurship and hand skill.[23] Pop Art is a genre born of industry. Peter Gay refers to the Pop phenomenon as "A shotgun marriage of high and low."[24] It has been suggested that he and other Pop artists fulfilled Duchamp's desire to break the paradigms of fine art.[25] The marriage resulted in a flat and oftentimes empty portrayal of the world, at least superficially. His chosen format embodies the flat personality that has come to be associated with

Warhol. The break with reality which childhood illness, among other stresses, can cause is echoed by his medium of choice. Bradford Collins suggests that Pop Art serves as a coping mechanism for "a nexus of psychological problems."[26] Pop Art serves as a platform to clarify and facilitate expression (or lack thereof) his personal concerns.

Warhol in the Modern Milleu

This may be the result of the nature of popular culture. "Pop culture" is a one dimensional, simplified, and commodity based perspective of the world. The idea of establishing a standard, consumerist culture is best summed up by a pithy remark by Warhol. When asked early in his career, "What does Coca-Cola mean to you?" He responded, "Pop".[27] It is a typical answer by Warhol. His response is flat and self-defining; pop is an alternate term for soda. While it is a correct answer, it is one born in flippancy and foolishness. It is a response that can also be viewed less literally. The popular emphasizes two factors: normalization and commodity, which is realized by every can of Coca-Cola. Warhol, however, did not have the luxury of being part of the "popular." Various facets of his identity, including his incidences of illness during childhood, left him on the margins.

An overarching threat to Warhol and the Pop project was the impact of Communism. The high-minded aims of Communism would eradicate any interest in brand name soup cans or kitchen-cleaning pads brought to fame by Warhol's *Campbell's Soup* and *Brillo Boxes*. He approached this issue in typical Warhol form, with tongue-in-cheek and an eye for exaggeration. Rather than succumbing to the fears and anxieties state socialism created, Warhol played to propaganda. He parodied the propaganda posters prevalent during the Chinese Cultural Revolution but rather than highlighting the political machine of Mao Tse-Tsung, he rendered Mao as what Justin Spring refers to as "a figure of fun."[28] His *Mao* (Fig. 4) wears lipstick and eye shadow--rendered in such a way as to make him nonthreatening. This is a typical mode of creation for Warhol and befitting of the manner by which he controlled his identity. He created portraits of the famous and himself that obfuscated the truth.

Portraiture is a mainstay within Warhol's body of work. It is on the faces of Warhol's subjects where he expresses the greatest distress. Indeed, the lack of expressiveness and repetition in his portraits creates the flat, empty images, which viewers have come to associate with him. Not

only did he embody the difference of being an immigrant, a homosexual and a Catholic but there was also the difference created by his illness. His use of portraiture could be interpreted as an effort to exert what little control he had and entrust the public with his manipulated narrative.

The narrative Warhol chose to adopt was deeply beauty focused. Despite this, Warhol had a difficult relationship with the concept of beauty. He makes the claim that the word 'beauty' essentially has no meaning.[29] His feelings surrounding issues of beauty are of considerable importance. One typically does not make such inflated statements unless diametrically opposed to a certain opinion. Warhol and his career are full of contradictions. The man, who built a career based on the beauty of starlets, had a very negative relationship with his own elegance and charm.

Handling of the Warhol Identity

One of Andy's most telling works is a series of self-portraits he took between 1963 and 1964 (Fig. 5). In the series he has several highly posed, Hollywood-esque images. Some of the images, however, are quite odd. There is an extra set of hands, which moves and warps Warhol's poses. The hands serve as an external representation of

Figure 3. Andy Warhol, *Before and After I*, 1961, Casein and pencil on canvas.

Figure 4. Andy Warhol, *Mao*, 1972, Acrylic and screen painting on linen.

Figure 5. Andy Warhol, *Self-Portrait*, 1963-1964, photobooth photograph.

Figure 6. Andy Warhol, *Self-Portrait with Skull*, 1978, Acrylic on linen.

his feelings regarding his appearance and a desire to edit his identity. A disconnect between man and body is underscored.

Warhol is said to control his identity, not unlike the handler seen in the image. He was known for cultivating his flaws as a way of deflecting questions. Perhaps that his most refined genre was storytelling. He treated the stigmas in his life in two very distinct manners. With regard to character, identity and/or bodily blemishes such as his homosexuality or distinctive nose, he put them out in the open so as to avoid questioning the obvious. An exception to this is found in his treatment of his "madness," which he only mentions in passing. Illness did not live up to his carefully filtered standard. Rejection from his classmates and an abjection creating illness were likely painful, not worth bringing to direct light. Abjection, while it draws in the viewer, it ultimately disgusts them. Powers is careful to note that he treats his Catholic and Slavic background differently, despite also being seen as stigma by outsiders.[30] In the context of his upbringing, attending mass and speaking Rusyn were viewed as normal and therefore are addressed with less vigor than his other "shortcomings".[31] The restriction of his identity was only heightened by his public

persona.

Warhol embodies the same performative quality in his portraits. His narratives are never far from the surface of his images.[32] This practice is done by design. It is a manner of making Warhol a commodity, whether he is a Hollywood puppet, as his "Self-Portrait" (1963-1964) seems to suggest or a "Vanitas" as his skull series from the 1970s conjectures (Fig. 6).[33] In essence, Warhol is willing to be anything but himself in the self-portraits he creates. He is not the focus of the portrait so much as he controls the subject of the images.

Rosenblum offers that Warhol reached a level of "secular sainthood," in other words, he achieved a level of notoriety where he is part of the pantheon of modern "saints" who can be referred to by first name alone. Rosenblum's essay notes that Warhol and his work are indeed indicative of art history in the post-modern milieu.[34] To be famous within the context of the post-modern age asks nothing more than an understanding of commodities and willingness to co-opt one's identity to the mainstream. This rings particularly true within the discourse of the queer community.

His reception within the queer community was tenuous. Figures such as Cherry Vanilla and Jayne (nèe Wayne) County were quite popular in film and stage productions at Warhol's factory. Perhaps this could be ascribed to their transsexual identities and therefore, they were too abject for mainstream co-option. So, too, were Robert Mapplethorpe and Patti Smith fixtures at the factory; gay man and female icon amongst gay men respectively.[35] Within the context of the high art community, Warhol's self-imposed, exaggerated homosexual identity, or "swishness," attracted attention--posed a risk. His pervasive effeminacy threatened to "out" his fellow gay artists by association, notably Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg.[36] He was left with two options to keep him homosexuality secret and potentially expose himself to unwanted curiosity or stick to what he knew best, kitsch, "swish" and beauties.

One of the most significant commodities of the 20th century targeted by Warhol are screen actresses and other particularly notable women. Peter Glidal notes that Warhol's subjects are mostly individuals involved with a taboo such as Lesbians, hustlers and pushers.[37] No doubt their shared identity on the margins of society created a sense of comfort for Warhol. Thomas Crow cites that in the context of the queer community, women are often the stars of the show.[38] Perhaps the most notable star of all is Marilyn Monroe. Warhol,

in one of his most iconic images, *Golden Marilyn Monroe*, gives Monroe her own relic of so-called "secular sainthood"(Fig. 7).

Ruth Adams is quick to mention the politics of blonde hair in her article "Idol Curiosity." Warhol broke the ideal image of Marian icons. Traditionally the gold and flaxen qualities of the Madonna are used to express divinity and purity. In Warhol's renditions such as "Golden Marilyn Monroe" and "Barbie, Portrait of Billy Boy*"(Fig. 8) however, the blondeness becomes more of a comment on the contemporary sexual signifier and less of a harkening to the purity normally associated with the Virgin Mary. Billy Boy*, much like Marilyn and Warhol, was a created entity.[39] Adams goes on to note that for both individuals, "going blonde" was indicative of a major life event. It marked a departure from their true identities to assumed personas.[40] It was also likely an attempt to co-opt the mainstream and therefore become a commodity, the sexy "dumb blonde." The persons they projected to the public were hardly true to the identities of either individual.

Warhol and Monroe were equally doomed individuals. It is no coincidence that Warhol chose Marilyn to "be his face" (i.e. the paradigmatic face of his work) as Adams proposes.[41] Some scholars posit Warhol as one of the greatest market researchers of all time. After all, very few individuals understand the impact of canned soup or kitchen cleaning pads on the American public. Warhol had a tight grasp on the concept of 'brand equity.' He built a commodity out of himself and all his creations.[42] By extension, he created a lack of humanity in the individuals he co-opted into to his work.

His rendering of Barbie serves as a midpoint between the mass-market items and his ultimate fame. She bridges the gap between Warhol's two major subject matters. Not unlike Marilyn, she embodies the virgin–whore paradox. While she is plastic and a child's toy, she also reflects pure sex appeal.[43] This is not so different from Warhol who presented a fragile man and a sexually open individual concurrently. To some degree, Barbie is a reflection of the culture at large. She is indicative of the push and pull between human reality and plastic perfection, the prevailing theme of Warhol's work. Both blondes project a lie. Yet, it is that very myth which has shaped post-modern American culture.

Psychoanalytic Devices

Warhol's work flattened the personae of the individuals rendered. Seemingly vibrant celebrities were collapsed into one-dimensional describers. For example, Marilyn Monroe was reduced to a sex-icon and Mao Tse-Tung to nothing more than a farcical emblem of control. It seems no mistake that the faces Warhol focused on were somewhat reflective of his own issues. His work reads as flat and lifeless because he, in effect, kills the subject. This is a paradigm of his oeuvre and is indicative of a kind of break with reality his childhood illness caused him. This, however, is also not entirely under his control. These behaviors are best categorized by the Lacanian term, *repetition*. Lacan and his psychoanalytic forebears note that individuals seem to make the same poor decisions repeatedly and for what appears to be no good reason. Lacan pares this issue down to *jouissance*, which can be defined as pleasure in excess. It is a misappropriation of the pleasure principle, rather than heeding the boundary between pleasure and pain. When the individual continues to seek pleasure to a point where pleasure becomes a perverse pain. It is part of a struggle between the self and the other. The individual struggles to find wholeness.[44] It can be linked with Warhol's

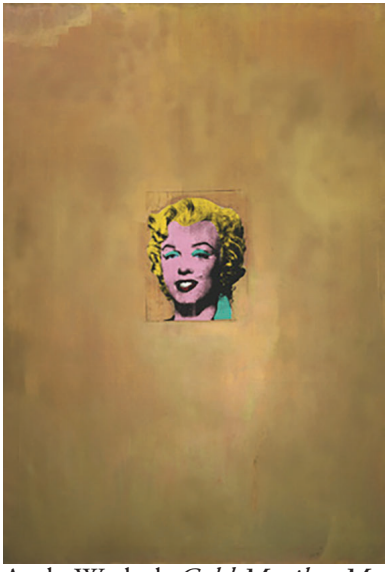

Figure 7. Andy Warhol, *Gold Marilyn Monroe*, 1962, silkscreen ink and synthetic polymer paint on canvas.

Figure 8. Andy Warhol, *Barbie, Portrait of Billy-boy**, 1986, Acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas.

Figure 9. Robert Mapplethorpe, *Andy Warhol*, 1986 printed 1990, Photograph gelatin silver print on paper.

Figure 10. Andy Warhol, *Camouflage Self-Portrait*, 1986, Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen on canvas.

oblique statements regarding homosexuality and his nose, or even his repetition of portraiture. These ideas are repeated to a point of damage in order to enumerate an entity that is missing. In the case of Warhol, this appears to be a pronounced sense of self. Warhol's return to a subject matter that causes pain and lies so closely to the traumas of his past appears to be almost masochistic.

Contemporary theorist, Slavoj Žižek, echoes these thoughts. He suggests that every human action is a repetition such that mankind has two basic decisions: sin or salvation. As soon as sin is chosen, there is no escape, the pattern holds across all behaviors. [45] Žižek applies this idea across several power structures. The most applicable of these structures to Warhol and his situation would be the relationship to authority. In this case, the authority Warhol would be countering is the American mainstream. The American view of beauty is arbitrary based mostly in the perspectives of just a few media tycoons. Warhol and his conception of the self are counter to this idea. Due to this he makes doubled efforts to expose his shortcomings.

While dicta such as "'there is no cure for genius'" are often ascribed to long-suffering artists, Warhol's life experiences suggest deeper damage.[46]

There is a relationship between affliction and the corresponding works of art. Sandblom suggests that the ill seek a method of communicating their struggles to the wider community.[47] To the contrary, what Sandblom fails to recognize is that there is an aspect of illness that separates the ill from the community, thus making sick individuals different and not part of the same reality. Disease is often accompanied by abjection. This is why their art often reads as strange, even haunted. The distress of sickness is more extensive than Sandblom is willing to admit.

Childhood Illness: Two Studies

Two studies of children in hospitals serve as proof of the damage illness can create. An Italian study focuses on leukemia patients during painful procedures. One of the most striking symptoms in patients was phantasmagorical visions. With treatment through play and art therapy, the children could become well adjusted. The authors note that illness can make children feel different because it removes them from play and other interactions with their peers.[48] This appears to be consistent with the idea that sickness creates an impaired perception of reality. A second American study supports these notions; an abandoned, physically and mentally ill African-American girl is the focus. She reports similar ghost-like visions and has comparable outcomes with art therapy. [49] Art can underscore both the hurt and heal the patient when used in the proper setting. The ghosts reported by patients are extraordinary and suggest the impact of their suffering. Furthermore, if left untreated, the mental tragedies of pediatric patients could deeply impact adulthood.

Left unattended, the ghosts of illness can haunt individuals for their entire life. Disease creates a sense of panic and disgust in adults but with children, the trauma moves a layer deeper. Children are removed from the simplicity of childhood and thrown into an adult world that comprises experiences and vocabularies that are not likely understood by the patient and misconceived by their peers.[50]

The potential break with reality that both psychological studies suggest is characterized by Warhol's overstatement of his shortcomings. It is unimportant if Warhol was a sufferer of what Collins called "a nexus of psychological problems"[51] or the complicated put-on Crow, Wolf, et.al suggest. There is a strong sense that Warhol possessed a crazy-like-a-fox mentality,

knowing well that his difference could be an asset. What seems to be a relatively ignored entity is the real impact of Warhol's bout of childhood illness. It is possible that he implemented his coping mechanism in such an advanced form of hide-and-seek that very few were ever able to understand the cause of pain and embarrassment illness created during his childhood. It was hidden behind the flatness of his artworks and his personality. The only time there ever seemed to be a break in Warhol's pervasive avoidance strategies is in a photograph taken in 1986 by Robert Mapplethorpe (Fig. 9). In this image, Warhol appears softer and more open. He makes eye contact with the camera rather than reflecting it through sunglasses, as typical. Perhaps Warhol had mellowed with age. This, however, seems unlikely, as Warhol's late style is not reflective of the same openness. In 1986, the same year he sat for the Mapplethorpe portrait, he created his camouflage series. "Camouflage Self-Portrait" (Fig.10) shows no signs of responsiveness. The Philadelphia Museum notes a feeling of danger in their description of the image.[52] This notion seems true. Warhol hides beneath a glaze of camouflage. Or perhaps his coping mechanisms were null and void in the presence of friend and fellow gay man, Mapplethorpe. Was it possible that Mapplethorpe's HIV positive status made Warhol even more comfortable? Both suffered from illnesses that disgraced their identities. Their illnesses created abjection, Julia Kristeva outlines this notion concretely as, "Apprehensive, desire turns aside; sickened, it rejects. A certainty protects it from the shameful…"[53] Illnesses, particularly those not well understood, construct feelings of shame and rejection. The public knew neither what to make of HIV, very little was known at the time of the outbreak nor of St. Vitus' Dance, which renders the body spastic and unreliable. Mapplethorpe was all too aware of this. His work often directly addresses his gay identity. While it was never intended, both men were co-opted into the mainstream as gay martyrs.[54] Their shared identities certainly added to the intimacy seen in the image. It should be noted that the photography was not printed until 1990 after both artists had passed away, perhaps it is because of the personal nature this image had for both individuals.[55] Mapplethorpe was certainly a more abject subject than Warhol in light of his HIV diagnosis and public opinion surrounding the HIV/AIDs virus at its outbreak. His relationship with Warhol, however, as revealed by the photograph, sheds

light on the man who existed beneath the coping mechanisms.

Warhol the Gentle and Sober

Wolf postulates that Warhol was indeed more intelligent, amicable and sober than the general public was lead to believe. She cites his close connection with the poetry community (which included Mapplethorpe) and a large collection of books catalogued upon his passing as her main evidence.[56] These thoughts are echoed by Krauss when she discusses the role of the author in the post-modern milieu.[57] In light of a newly established lack of authorial gravity, Warhol no longer needed to offer himself as part and parcel of his art. His work serves as testimony to the remarkable manner by which the world changed in the 1960s, and the new attitudes served as a layer of protection against the scrutiny of the outside world. Warhol and his works no longer needed to serve the same ends thus, freeing the artist to hide behind an alternate identity.

Warhol's friend, former studio assistant and poet, Gerard Malanga echoes this, noting the role of the creator being hidden in his poem for Warhol, "Now in Another Way":

> "The artist is stretching and stapling as the
> determined look /
> of somewhere ahead /
> Becomes two faces destroying themselves, that
> turn black /
> with repetition".[58]

The reference to two faces turning black with repetition is not only suggestive of Warhol's silkscreens but also his two-faced personality, which managed to obscure his direst shortcomings. This was also his major detriment. His close jurisdiction over his identity destroyed him. In order to protect his most sensitive, vulnerable aspects he allowed no room for emotional fragility. Thus, the public remembers him as a foolish man, pickled by plastic surgery and camera flash. On the contrary, he is representative of a more dimensional individual than his public persona leads many to believe. His personality is indeed multi-faceted, inclusive of his childhood illness. His entire identity, even aspects that remain hidden, impacted his influence over Pop Culture.

Conclusion

Warhol and his influence permeate western culture from grocery aisles to radio waves. It is essential to understand what factors shaped such a pervasive discourse. While often minimized by

other biographic details such as his personality and sexuality, Warhol's incidences of childhood illness profoundly affected him and so too his work. This piece of alienating history must be established in order to understand his corpus thoroughly, particularly his treatment of portraiture. It also may account for the very nature of the Pop style, so distinctively defined by Warhol.

The flat canvas of his many famous silk-screens serve as the platform for the expression of Warhol's internal friction. He cared not so much if they were signed by him or done by his own hand; so much as they were created with machine-like implication (perfection was a rare reality). The gloss distracts from the destruction. Crow suggests that the world created by Warhol was an allegory. The context he lived in was precarious, described by Crow "…[that] his approach or quest takes place in a world of conflict and constant mortal danger." [59] Perhaps this is the same danger reflected in his "Camouflage Self-Portrait. On a personal level, he lived a difficult life spanning from a poor upbringing, social rejection, lack of acceptance by his homosexual peers and childhood illness. Not to mention a tenuous relationship with his body that would continue into his later life and was punctuated by the attempt on his life by Valerie Solonas. On the macro level, he saw even greater strife such as: a world war, the Kennedy assassination, the cold war, and the AIDs outbreak. The plastic coolness of the Pop movement spearheaded by Warhol provided recourse to a world rife with struggle and the shadows of a traumatized youth. It offers a place of safety from the emotional ordeals of the sick child. Portraiture is a fairytale that casts its plastic mist across the work of Warhol, protecting him from the monsters of his past.

Endnotes

[1] Reva Wolf, *Andy Warhol, Poetry and Gossip in the 1960s*, (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1997).

[2] Kynaston McShine, "Introduction," *Andy Warhol: A Ret rospective* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989), 13.

[3] Richard D. Custer, *"What is a Rusyn, What Is a Rusyn?"* Carpatho-Rusyn Society.

[4] Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 21.

[5] Glen O'Brien "Andy Warhol." *Interview* 38.5 (2008),103.

[6] Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again*, 22.
"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."

[7] Bradford Collins, "The Metaphysical Nose Job: The Re making of Warhola 1960-1968," *Arts Magazine February* (1988), 52.

[8] ibid, 48.
"I'd been hurt a lot to the degree you can only be hurt when you care a lot. So I guess I did care a lot..."

[9] Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again*, 22.

[10] ibid.

[11] *Sydenham Chorea NINDS Information Page*. http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/sydenham/sydenham.htm

[12] Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again*, 21.

[13] *Andy Warhol*. Dir. Kim Evans. Perf. Melvyn Bragg. Home Vision, 1987. Videocassette.

[14] Edward D. Powers, "All Things That I Didn't Want to Change Anyway: Andy Warhol and the Sociology of Difference," *American Art*, 26.1 (Spring 2012), 56.

[15] Gavin Butt, *Between you and Me: Queer Discourses in the New York Art World*, 1948-1963, (Durham: Duke University, 2005), 106.

[16] Glen O'Brien "Andy Warhol." *Interview* 38.5 (2008), 103.

[17] Reva Wolf, *Andy Warhol,Poetry and Gossip in the 1960s*, 11.

[18] Andy Warhol: The College Years." *Warhol*. Warhol Mu suem, This image is sometimes referred to by other titles, including the substitution of "Broad" for lord, it is alternately called "Nosepicker I: Why Pick on Me"

[19] Powers, "All Things That I Didn't Want to Change Anyway: Andy Warhol and the Sociology of Dif ference," *American Art*, 56.

[20] Powers, ibid.

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