Shopping the Leftovers:
Warhol's collecting strategies in *Raid the Icebox I*

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*Raid the Icebox I*, Andy Warhol's 1969 exhibition curated from basement storage at the Museum of Art of the Rhode Island School of Design (henceforth, RISD Museum), was overlooked in the Warhol corpus until very recently. I first became aware of it when I read Michael Lobel’s 1996 *Art Journal* essay, "Warhol’s Closet."

Lobel’s article stunned me for I had been teaching at RISD for seven years and had never once heard anyone mention the Warhol show. Armed with a modest grant to develop a course using the institution’s collections, I decided to pry open the RISD Museum’s closet and take a look at the pale silver-haired skeleton who still haunted it.

What had Warhol made of this provincial bastion of plutocratic gentility, the legacy of rich New England mercantile and industrial families whose porcelain miniatures and hand-carved chests still grace its galleries? What about Warhol’s visit had so traumatized the RISD Museum that it virtually erased its memory for decades? That the Museum was a fabulous camp-ground for an omnivorous collector like Warhol was beyond doubt. But as I studied the catalogue and the surprisingly thin archival documentation of the show, another aspect of Warhol’s sensibility made itself increasingly felt, namely his finely tuned proletarian consciousness. Unlike most ambitious youth who flee the provinces for Manhattan, Warhol never despised nor disidentified with his working-class origins. As I learned more about *Raid the Icebox I*, I was put in mind of Quentin
Crisp’s oft-repeated quip that rather than keeping up with the Joneses, it was much more gratifying to drag them down to one’s level. I would be hard pressed to find a more apt summary of Warhol’s curatorial philosophy in *Raid the Icebox I*.

In his essay, Lobel performs an insightful reading of three public displays of Warhol’s collecting. Two of these were mounted by the artist during his lifetime, *Raid the Icebox I* and *Folk and Funk*, the 1977 exhibition of his folk art collection at the Museum of American Folk Art in New York. The third was the notorious 1988 Sotheby’s auction of some ten thousand items from the artist’s estate. Lobel uses these three instances of Warhol’s collecting and display to map the borders between public and private in the artist’s life, comparing them to the operations of the closet for gay men in the pre-Stonewall era. Lobel points to the sharp division Warhol established between his downtown world of the Factory and his intensely private uptown world where he lived for many years with his elderly immigrant mother and an array of cats; and later, with his Filipina maids, dogs, and -- too rarely, perhaps -- a sweet and beautiful boy of the type that populated his drawing board and posed for his Polaroids. Such a beauty materialized most notably in Jed Johnson, his studio assistant, social companion, and interior decorator when Warhol bought the elegant Georgian townhouse on East 66th Street.

Lobel notes the parallel between Warhol’s lived geography and the dichotomous spaces of bourgeois life in industrial capitalism, split between the factory as the place of labor, exchange, and production, and the home as the locus of consumption, nurturance, and intimacy. But he leaves economic and class analysis behind as he pursues Warhol’s shopping and collecting in relation to the logics of the closet -- a metaphor literalized by the artist in his catalogue cover for *Folk and Funk*. In Lobel’s discussion, *Raid the Icebox I* and *Folk and Funk* both offered
the artist an occasion to recontextualize objects from high culture, folk culture, and popular culture, investing them with new value. Lobel likens this activity to the ways the closet allows the gay subject to take the heterogeneous elements of his life and create an erotics of simultaneous display and secrecy that preserves access to and mobility in straight society while mirroring back a coherent image of an idealized and eroticized self.²

The "open secret" characteristic of the homosexual closet invested the icons and objects Warhol selected to reproduce, embellish, fetishize and spectacularize in his work with codes readable to those in the know, even while they remained largely opaque to those outside, who didn't get it, who weren't "pop." This was particularly obvious in the case of the Raid exhibition, where the artist was brought in at the behest of art super-patrons Jean and Dominique de Menil to "curate" a show from existing collections.³ The RISD Museum's ambitious young director, Daniel Robbins, had given Jean de Menil a tour of the dilapidated storage areas, trying to interest him in funding much-needed conservation. Noting that ninety percent of the museum's collections were hidden from public view, the de Menils hatched the idea of commissioning important vanguard artists to curate a series of shows from the reserve. The first artist they suggested to "raid the icebox" was Andy Warhol. He would also be the last. Museum curators are, by definition, object experts, connoisseurs, and professionals, but their conventional categories of classification were thrown into turmoil by Warhol's method of selection which seemed random, indiscriminant, and maliciously indifferent to value.

When Daniel Robbins died in 1995, a special issue of RISD Museum Notes was published in his honor. In it, Lisa Graziose Corrin contributed an essay on the importance of Raid the Icebox I in developing a genealogy for 1990s museum
interventions by conceptual artists such as Fred Wilson, Joseph Kosuth, Andrea Fraser, Louise Lawler, Christian Boltanski and James Luna. Though unique as an activity in Warhol’s oeuvre, Corrin viewed Raid the Icebox I as entirely consistent with Warhol’s aesthetic in its blurring of the boundaries among categories of taste, its refusal of judgment and selection, its preoccupation with series, its parallels to Warhol’s own acquisitive passions and the artist’s reconnecting of the nineteenth-century museum to its mass-market twin, the department store. Corrin found Raid the Icebox I “charming in its remarkable lack of self-consciousness” and “attitude” when compared to the “rhetoric of critique and populism” that characterized more recent “postmodern” museum projects, but I would take issue with this attribution of unself-consciousness. Warhol was politically indifferent, for the most part, but he was never unself-conscious about anything. I would like to submit another take on Raid the Icebox I, one that is not in conflict with Lobel’s or Corrin’s versions (or Peter Wollen’s), but which seeks to supplement and enrich their accounts by focusing on Warhol’s proletarian identification (a mix of old-world peasant and catholic blue-collar), and its significance as a consistent structuring principle in his work and pop sensibility.

From his formative childhood years in the poor and lower-middle-class Eastern European enclaves of Pittsburgh (“babushkas and overalls on the clotheslines”), Warhol absorbed the fetish magic of Hollywood movie stars and American brand labels. Stars of Hollywood’s studio era cultivated powerful stylized personas over a series of reiterative screen roles. In his book on the changing fortunes of camp culture, Daniel Harris called the movies “a poor man’s aestheticism” for those unable to acquire the material accoutrements of bourgeois dandy style. Labels like “Campbell’s Soup” or “Coke,” on the other hand,
connoted for Warhol the essence of “Americanness”: equality, order, and social leveling through standardized consumption. A label like "Bonwits," "Tiffany's" or "Bendel" signified high style, prime quality, money. A label like "fag" or "homo" brought unbearable pain. Warhol was a nonce-taxonomist of popular culture. Both his humble background and his queerness made label-reading and rewriting necessary survival skills in a postwar society hostile to shy, sensitive, and delicate boys who liked to draw, write fan letters to movie stars, play with paper dolls, and join the college modern dance club.

After moving to New York and establishing himself as an award-winning illustrator, Warhol confronted the professional chasm between the labels "commercial artist" and "fine artist" -- a distinction that encoded a whole postwar ideology of the avant-garde. For an artist who wouldn't be caught dead reading Clement Greenburg, however, it boiled down to being snubbed at parties by his role models, Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, and passed over (at first) by Leo Castelli, the preeminent dealer and promoter of Pop Art. The mercenary associations of the one were seen to contaminate the other's spiritual values, even as Warhol's "swishness," as Emile De Antonio informed him, threatened to contaminate Johns' and Rauschenberg’s performances of straight masculinity. Despite his ambition to make it in the fine art world, Warhol defended his integrity as both a "swish" and a commercial artist. "I decided I just wasn't going to care," he recounts in *Popism*, "because those were all things that I didn't want to change anyway, that I didn't think I should want to change. . .Other people could change their attitudes, but not me." The Joneses needed to come down to his level.

Warhol would come to be seen as the great boundary defiler by conservative critics such as Hilton Kramer and Robert Hughes, who laced their
reviews with snide condescension. Not only did he defile the romantic cult of alienated male genius that still saturated the art market, but he defiled the temples of high culture with their exclusions, rituals, sanctimoniousness, and a whole professional hierarchy based on affirming and authenticating the uniqueness and significance of objects in constructing the grand progress myth of art history.

In his book *Stargazer*, Stephen Koch likens Warhol to a "parvenu Proust" who "played with the infinite gradations of social standing" in New York's culture world. While more recent approaches have qualified Koch's conventionally Freudian account of Warhol's strategies, his brief introductory gloss on the artist's class allegiances is revealing. Koch asserts that Warhol gravitated to two social spheres: Upper Bohemia and Lower Bohemia. Upper Bohemia is the world of celebrities, money, and café society (and traditionally the haunt of upwardly mobile youth on the make). Lower Bohemia is the world of outcasts and failures at the American success story celebrated by the Beats and populated by drag queens, hustlers, dancers, dope dealers, aspiring poets and actors, speed-freaks, and other assorted fallen angels -- those Warhol himself referred to as society's "left-overs." The social stratum Warhol particularly detested, Koch continues, was Middle Bohemia as it existed forty years ago, epitomized by the macho Cedar Bar scene and much of the vanguard art world of the late 1950s and early 1960s. In Greenberg's influential wake, artists and intellectuals discoursed endlessly and authoritatively about each discipline's self-critical values; disparaged corporate culture as opiate of the masses, and professed to judge quality on the basis of disinterested principle while vigorously disavowing their own subjective investments.
Middle Bohemian academicians, of course, write the labels that adumbrate the story of art, conferring the all-important aura on objects by naming those worthy of being salvaged, acquired, conserved, classified and invested with surplus exchange value. Middle Bohemia wholly mediates the public reception of art and takes its educational mission seriously, staging pageants and spectacles of elite connoisseurship in publicly subsidized museum settings, undergirded by authenticating texts and audiophone narration. On many occasions, Warhol reiterated his desire to be a machine and eagerly adopted an array of technological prosthetics from his movie cameras to his Polaroid and omnipresent tape recorder that he called his "wife." These were not only "baffles," as Henry Geldzahler asserted, to mediate Warhol's presence in public space and shield him from direct interactions with strangers, but weapons with which to jam the authoritative voice of the Middle Bohemian experts and critics who shaped and edited the master narrative and who generated the magic texts that confer the aura.

Even when Warhol turned away from his Lower Bohemian friends to hobnob with the rich and famous, as he increasingly did after he was shot, he did so as a fascinated and voracious observer rather than as a seamless member of the club. Anyone who has read the Philosophy of Andy Warhol, Popism, and the posthumous Warhol Diaries knows what I mean. Rarely has there been a social observer so keenly funny on the habits and foibles of what was then quaintly referred to as the jet-set. In this, he claims his rightful place (not yet granted in the world of letters) within the tradition of lavender literary wits from Oscar Wilde to Gore Vidal, but his lavender is decidedly tinged with blue, as in blue-collar.

This class sensibility, for me, is what frames the artist's approach to Raid the Icebox I, even more than stereotypical camp taste that he actively deflected in this
context, as we will see. Warhol was ambivalent about the project from the start, but his business manager, Fred Hughes, who relished his new role as Warhol’s agent, was eager to exploit his close connections to the de Menils to feather his own and Andy’s nests.¹⁷ He had already landed two lucrative commissions for Warhol to film sunsets and produce a silk-screened portrait of Dominique de Menil. Valerie Solanas’s 1968 shooting had boosted Warhol’s market prices and Hughes capitalized on this, persuading the de Menils to purchase a number of the artist’s early hand-painted pop works still in the studio, and engineering Warhol’s guest appearance in an advertisement for Braniff Airlines -- the first of many such commissions.

Students at the Rhode Island School of Design were ambivalent about the Warhol event, viewing the Museum of Art, by and large, as more interested in courting moneyed donors than in welcoming student riff-raff into its precincts.¹⁸ In his introductory catalogue essay, Director Robbins chided the students for their short attention spans and apparent disinterest in attending in-house shows curated from the collections. "Unfortunately, the free young, especially the art students at the School of Design," he wrote," seemed to lack patience for the bulk of the objects on exhibition, not to say familiarity with the now obscure iconography that was routine a few hundred years ago." Robbins hoped that Raid the Icebox I would help bridge the cultural gap between the museum and the school.

Dominique de Menil couched her impetus for bringing Warhol to the museum in terms of noblesse oblige. In her Foreword to the exhibition catalogue, she positioned Warhol among the "oracles, priests, seers and prophets" who serve as our initiators into "the mysteries of art."¹⁹ Such sentiments didn’t go down well in 1969 at the height of the anti-Vietnam and radical black power movements, the
summer of the Stonewall riots and the widespread politicization of college campuses. That the RISD Museum would have invited an artist who seemed so blatantly apolitical and self-absorbed in his own celebrity struck many students as insulting and confirmed their belief in the institution's hostility to the "real public" it should be serving.

At the exclusive members' cocktail preview before Raid the Icebox I opened, local newspapers reported that the festivities were picketed, then disrupted by fifty to one hundred students protesting the school's unwillingness to fund more scholarships for minority students. Beating a drum and chanting, "The money's there, if you care," the students marched through the galleries carrying signs reading, "People over porcelain!" "There are plenty of people who love porcelain," snapped Robbins to local reporters and it was noted that Warhol seemed visibly agitated and distressed by the demonstration which interrupted the press conference he was conducting with socialite Jane Forth posing as his “girlfriend,” Carol LaBrie. 20

While the subversiveness of Warhol's curating was imperceptible to students in the era of late 1960s campus protest, it was not lost on the curatorial staff to whom Robbins offered his "deep appreciation and sympathy" for "allow[ing] such a mare's nest to be openly stirred."21 David Bourdon, a member of Warhol's entourage who was covering the story for Art News, recounts Warhol's interactions with the RISD Museum staff as Robbins led them through the storage rooms. No doubt aware of Warhol's taste in superstars, Robbins repeatedly tried to goad the artist into selecting stock drag-queen get ups from the costume department, including "extravagant laces, the richest Ecclesiastical vestments, exotic African weaves, Coptic cloths and the garments of Chinese Emperors."22
Later, he tried to tempt Warhol with other hackneyed signifiers of fag-decorator style: "our enormous collection of Chinese-export porcelain" or our "sophisticated European porcelains, including figurines." "I was certain," recounted Robbins, "that a large group of Limoges door pulls, or an almost endless series of snuff and pill boxes would grab him, but they did not elicit a flicker." Warhol refused to take the bait and live up to the "camp queen" billing.23

Almost as soon as the storage walk-through began, Warhol disrupted the proceedings to ask Robbins if there were "any good antique shops in town" where he could find "Americana, stuff like that."24 No doubt stimulated by this commissioned performance of simulated consumption and acquisition, Warhol violated the boundaries of masculine seriousness, scholarly detachment and that palpable sense of larger mission that characterizes the curatorial project, giving voice to the spontaneous feminine passion of the impulse-shopper. Later, when asked how he liked the experience of "acting curator," Warhol replied that it was fun: "You own all that art for as long as you're there."25

Like a shopaholic on speed, and to the vocal dismay of the curators, Warhol selected for display entire collections of objects in their impromptu storage containers and arrays: all of the shoes in the large wooden cabinet, plus the cabinet; all of the hatboxes and bandboxes piled on a table; all of the paintings in gilt frames stacked against a wall; all of the old piles of auction catalogues stacked on a desk; all of the parasols strung up on wires or stuffed with the shoe cabinet; the entire row of Windsor chairs used for spare parts; the whole group of mixed statues on pedestals; a chest full of Indian blankets; two shelves of ancient Indian ceramic pots and a cluster of baskets. Robbins noted, "There were exasperating moments when we felt that Andy Warhol was exhibiting 'storage' rather than
works of art, and that a series of labels could mean as much to him as the paintings to which they refer."26

Warhol further contaminated the museum’s space with the flagrant display of his proletarian body and its needs. Distracted as the visit wore on by a painful ingrown toenail, Bourdon reports that the artist "cut open the tip of his left shoe and his big toe poking through the hole was a brilliant chartreuse, that being the color of the tights he was wearing under his brown suede pants."27

Warhol's alienation from the institution and its civilizing mission was expressed once again when he visited painting storage and diffidently selected a number of secondary and inferior works to be displayed as he found them, propped against the walls with sandbags or hanging in a hodge-podge on their sliding metal racks. "Under his breath he mumbled that he couldn't stand 'old art'," Bourdon reports, but excited by the discovery of a contemporary copy of the *Mona Lisa*, Warhol demanded that only fakes be shown. "If that's real," he said, pointing to a Cézanne still life, "we won't take it." Dominique de Menil, who happened to be along, cajoled him into including it with the copies and inferior works to "baffle everybody."

Indulging his own personal collecting passions, Warhol selected a number of early American primitives by anonymous artists and "anything that included Indians." Indeed, the *Raid the Icebox I* catalogue listings forecast the Warhol estate auction inventory. But the artist also chose the most abject specimens from the reserve whose flaws marked them as more akin to dumpster-dive booty than museum artifacts: paintings with rips and stains; half-done and bad restorations; broken furniture; tied bundles of moldy old catalogues waiting to be discarded; inferior duplications of objects; scuffed mass-market objects of recent vintage; a
table too warped to hold anything. He even requested the inclusion of a live ginkgo tree which he spied in the museum’s outdoor sculpture garden. "I liked everything," Warhol told a reporter for the Houston Chronicle, "[especially] the paintings with holes and trees."²⁸

Warhol specifically requested that each of the individual items in the exhibition, whether valuable or not, be catalogued as completely as possible. This "extremely difficult and painstaking task," as Robbins delicately put it, fell to the reluctant Chief Curator, Stephen Ostrow. In a 1998 email to my research assistant, Ostrow confessed that he simply had the texts from the catalog cards in the Registrar’s Office typed onto lists without any further research, though this "bothered [him] terribly" at the time and inspired him to exhibit his own selections from the reserve and provide new documentation informing the works on display.²⁹ As demonstrated in the Raid catalogue, however, the traditional power of the curatorial label to assert a coherent narrative of the logic of artistic development or to validate the object’s singularity was thoroughly undermined.

The suppression of socially connotative meaning embedded in conventional art-historical taxonomies was boldly made visible through the repetitions of the catalogue lists, as was the spectacle of surplus accumulation of commodities by museums, the result of both the curatorial pursuit of the perfect specimen and wealthy collectors’ desires for status display and immortality -- mutually interdependent economic and social investments actively repressed in the spaces and discourses of the museum.³⁰ To demand that a classically trained art historian and professional connoisseur assemble data on scores of "storm rubbers," and "gym shoes" donated by the U.S. Rubber Company, the same as he would for the Rodin or the Cézanne, was an exquisite act of class revenge.
In his *Philosophy*, Warhol frequently singled out for ridicule enduring class stigmas and people who demonstrated their superiority by what they refused to acknowledge or the tasks they refused to perform. In one memorable chapter on “Work,” Warhol suggested that the President set an example for the country and validate working people such as maids and janitors by going on national television and cleaning toilets in the Capitol. While Warhol had no leverage over the Nixon White House (in fact, the FBI opened a file on the artist during Nixon’s administration), having the power to demand that a buttoned-down chief curator undertake the tedious clerk’s labor of valorizing and authenticating unremarkable objects of mass consumption and rejects dredged from the museum's *oubliette* in endless procession must have produced its own perverse gratification.

Warhol’s blatant disregard for art historical orders of classification, professional decorum, and conventions of object display was consistent with the way he would treat his own collection in his elegant townhouse and his unique "Time Capsule" method of disposing of mementos and materials he couldn’t bear to throw away. While there isn’t time here to elaborate on these other aspects of Warhol’s collecting, this refusal (against the advice of his many collector friends) to develop a correct methodology of elite consumption and display signaled his deep resistance to claiming the signifiers of competitive upward mobility so dear to those like Fred Hughes, a mobility Warhol's celebrity and wealth made possible for both of them.

Upward mobility is the payoff promised by the consumerist myth -- indeed, it is the American Dream itself. But Warhol hid his diamond necklace under his turtleneck and served box lunches from the downstairs deli to socialites and foreign diplomats on the elegant ebony Ruhlmann conference table. In his palatial
uptown mansion, decorated in Jed Johnson's overripe taste, Warhol crammed the closets full of silver, Navajo rugs and Native American carvings along with shopping bags stuffed with candy, and piled furnishings, objects, paintings, books, stacks of mail, and overflowing bags on every available surface.\textsuperscript{34} Allowing the five floors of his mansion to be given wholly to chaotic accumulative storage, Warhol ate his cereal and toast in the kitchen with his two Filipina maids and their two brothers whom he employed as handymen, and stashed his walking-around money under his mattress. When he ate in fancy restaurants, as he often did, he would pick at his food, request a doggie bag and leave his dinner strategically placed in a location where a street person would find it. On holidays, he served meals to the homeless at a church-run shelter.

Unlike the homes of the bourgeois dandies who served as role models for generations of gay collectors, Warhol did not maintain his domestic space as a stage to mirror back to himself an image of mastery: both of the feminine pose of cultivated taste and the masculine pose of material success. Like the flagrant display of his inflamed green toe in the museum, he overwhelmed the decorum of its grand galleries with a defiant working-class sensibility. The stage-sets and mirrors he preferred were to be found downtown, in the hyper-theatrical, Factory-like spaces of the discos and dance clubs where new technologies of light and music created a seductive illusion of the dissolution all social boundaries and the production of ideal new "class-less" bodies for superstars on a mass scale, simultaneously revealed and obscured in the pulsing flash of the strobes.\textsuperscript{35}
Notes

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7 “The movies. . .provided a poor man’s aestheticism, a cheap method of satisfying the frustrated aesthetic sensibility of florists, hair stylists, waiters, and bank clerks who would otherwise not have been able to erect such protective divisions of elegance.” Daniel Harris, *The Rise and Fall of Gay Culture*, New York, 1997, p. 26.

8 “Sometimes you fantasize that people who are really up there and rich and living it up have something you don’t have, that their things must be better than your things because they have more money than you. But they drink the same Cokes and eat the same hot dogs and wear the same ILGWU clothes and see the same TV shows and the same movies.” Warhol, *The Philosophy*, op. cit., (note 6), p. 101.


11 ibid., p. 12


18 I am indebted to Ruth Dealy, then a painting student, for her reminiscences as one of the protest leaders at the Raid the Icebox I opening. She vividly recalls students’ alienation from the RISD Museum’s cultural milieu.

19 “It takes ardour, curiosity, patience to attune our ears to the ‘Voices of Silence.’ It takes also oracles and priests. No one would have approached the Eleusian mysteries without initiation. The mysteries of art require initiation too. If critics and scholars can open many doors, only seers and prophets open the royal gates.” Dominique de Menil, “Foreword,” Raid the Icebox I with Andy Warhol. op. cit., (note 2), p. 5.


22 ibid., p. 14.

23 This was four years after Susan Sontag had published her famous “Notes on Camp” in the Partisan Review, an essay which made a coded gay aesthetic accessible and “interesting” to mainstream elites. “To name a sensibility. . .


27 Bourdon, ‘Andy’s Dish,” op. cit., p. 24. Another account of Warhol’s penchant for letting his toes hang out can be found in Popism where Emile de Antonio chides the artist for his shabby shoes. “As he was leaving he looked down at my feet and said, ‘When the hell are you going to get yourself a new pair of shoes? You’ve been wearing those that way all over town for a year. They’re crummy and creepy – your toes sticking out.’” I enjoyed De’s honesty a lot, but I didn’t get new shoes – it’d taken me too long to break that pair in.” Warhol, Popism, op. cit., (note 10), p. 6.

28 Ann Holmes, “‘Raiding’ Exhibit Warhol Wilderness,” Houston Chronicle, October 30, 1969, Section 3, p. 1. Antiques dealer Vito Giallo recalled a related incident: “Once I bought a wonderful American painting from the thirties... and Andy said he wanted to see it. When it was delivered to me, I saw that the mover had knocked a big hole in the middle of it and I thought, ‘Oh, my God!’ But what Andy liked best about it was its hole.” Steven M. L. Aronson, “Possession Obsession,” House and Garden, December 1987, p. 196. (My thanks to Richard Meyer for bringing this article to my attention.)

29 Email from Stephen E. Ostrow to Anne Lessy, July 13, 1998.

30 See Russell W. Belk, Collecting in a Consumer Society, London and New York, 1995. “Art historians created a science of artwork (and perhaps aesthetics) that became a part of the cultural capital of the upper social classes. . . what democratized consumption in an affluent consumer society took away, was regained by the elite, at least for a time, in the sacred temple of the museum.” (pp 107-108).


32 In a letter to Daniel Robbins requested the inclusion of the following items in the exhibition “to create some kind of basement atmosphere”: “A sofa covered with Turkish rugs, which Andy saw just before he was leaving and loved; The pile of auction catalogues already mentioned (about a cubic yard); A black lacquered chair, which was downstairs in the room where the crates are received. You may remember what I am talking about because Andy noticed it and commented on it. It is in bent plywood and the guard was sitting on it; As many sandbags as you can spare; All the wallpapers that are framed as
well as all the rolls. All those items would not have to be listed in the catalogue.”

33 A comparison with Robert Mapplethorpe’s sophisticated and tasteful display of his acquisitions, discussed by Richard Meyer elsewhere in this volume, is instructive. “In the late sixties the inspired connoisseur Fred Hughes, Andy’s best friend and now the executor of his estate, had the bright idea – or was it the brilliant impulse – to go to the flea market in Paris and buy Dunand and Legrain furniture. . . He also went to Puiforcat and Cartier. . .” Aronson, “Possession Obsession,” op. cit., (note 27), p. 194. Hughes was not shy about taking credit for educating Warhol’s taste and Ted Carey took credit for inspiring Andy’s early taste for Americana. Jed Johnson offered this insight into Warhol’s attitude toward his acquisitions: “Andy had the peasant’s wisdom that if people (either the very rich or the very poor) knew that you had anything good, they’d probably try to take it away from you. So he hid what he had. It was inconspicuous consumption. He’d wear a diamond necklace, but only under a black cotton turtleneck.” Jed Johnston, “Inconspicuous Consumption,” in The Andy Warhol Collection, New York: Sotheby’s, 1988, unpaginated.

34 See Evelyn Hofer’s memorable photograph of Warhol’s cluttered dining room which illustrates Michael Lobel’s essay, op. cit., (note 1), pp. 42-43. In her memoir, Famous for Fifteen Minutes, Ultra Violet describes vividly a posthumous visit to Warhol’s townhouse: “. . . In a narrow passage reminiscent of a Zulu trail, bordered by an African drum, stands a nineteenth-century carved and painted cigar store figure in pine, whimsically juxtaposed with a display of jeweled eighteen-carat gold compacts signed and hallmarked Van Cleef and Arpels, Cartier, Tiffany. Jewelry cabinets spill over with pounds of gems: citrine quartz, ruby, diamonds, platinum, gold, blue, and yellow sapphires, plus some one hundred twenty pins, bracelets, and rings. . . Dead center in the drawing room, a painted and stenciled marquetry table with a slate top, attributed to John Finlay of Baltimore, holds books, cigarette cases, and two shopping bags; an Egyptian-revival armchair, gewgawed with gilded birds and gold lions’ paws, harbors three more shopping bags; ornate antique gold capitals atop flat-ribbed columns adorn each corner of the room. At their feet cluster busts, candlesticks, and bronzed statuettes. . .” Ultra Violet, Famous for Fifteen Minutes: My Years with Andy Warhol, New York, 1988, pp. 270-271.

35 “The space of the disco was one of the most radical environments Western society has created in the last fifty years. More and more technology was brought to bear on the creation of an environment that had no bounds, no solidity, and no reality.” Betsky, Queer Space, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 160-161.

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