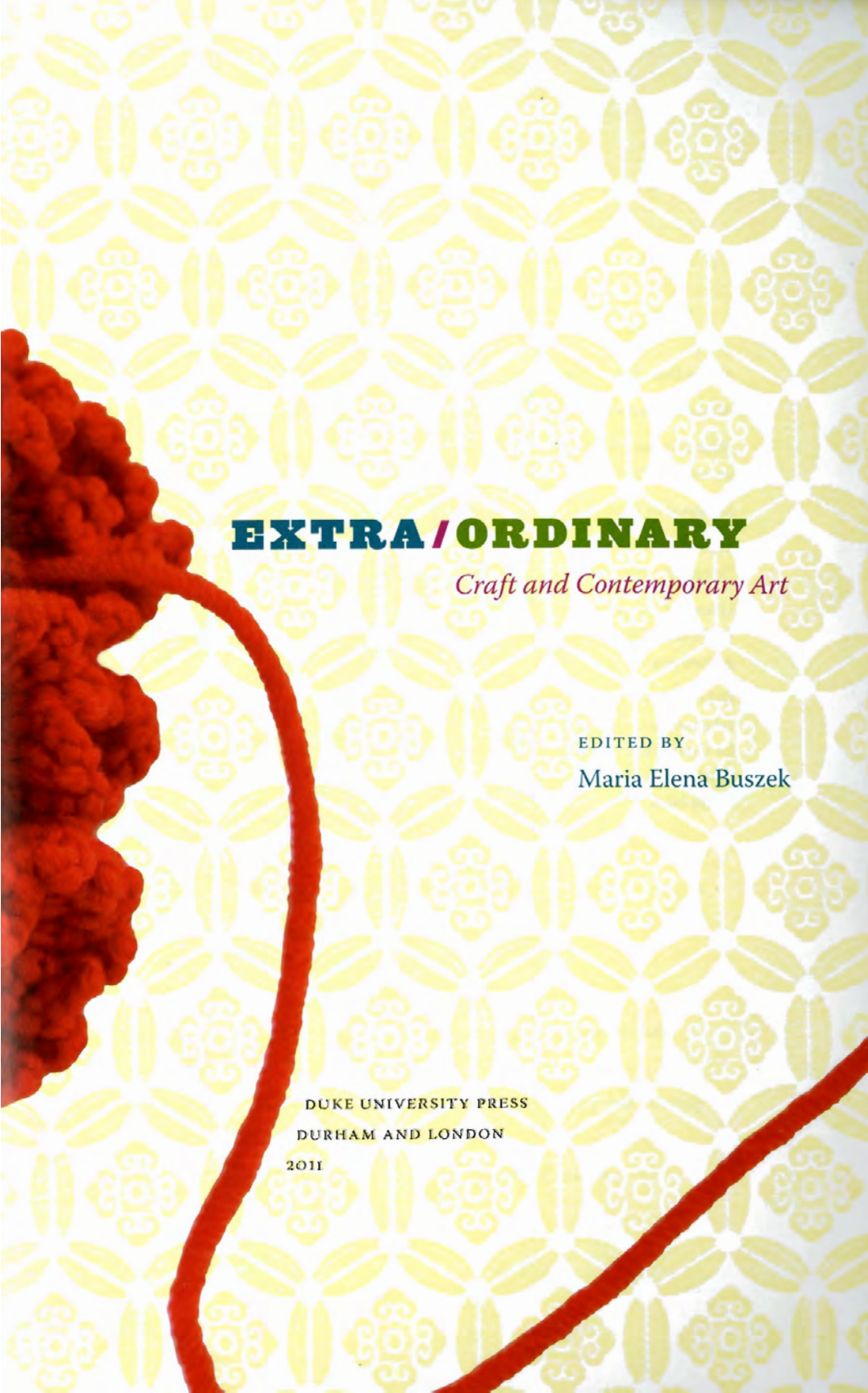

EXTRA/ORDINARY

Craft and Contemporary Art

EDITED BY

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DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS
DURHAM AND LONDON
2011

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Wallpaper, the Decorative, and Contemporary Installation Art

I've made a career out of being the right thing in the wrong space and the wrong thing in the right space. That's one thing I really do know about.

—Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol* (1975)

For a show at the Leo Castelli Gallery in 1964, Andy Warhol covered the walls of the gallery with dozens of his *Flower* paintings. Noting the bizarre, wall-to-wall arrangement of pictures, the critic Thomas Hess remarked, "It is as if Warhol got hung up on the cliché that attacks 'modern art' for being like wallpaper, and he decided that wallpaper is a pretty good idea, too."[1] By his own admission, Warhol frequently scanned his reviews for new, good ideas, so it perhaps comes as no surprise that for his next Castelli show in 1966 he debuted the *Cow Wallpaper* (see fig. 1) as part of a double installation that also included his helium-filled, reflective pillows, the *Silver Clouds*.[2]

On the surface, Warhol's *Cow Wallpaper* appeared to be a simple lampoon of critical opinion, and in reviews of the period and later it was treated (along with the *Flowers* and *Silver Clouds*) as, at best, a minor work, marking the end of his genuine production as an artist. Rainer Crone's evaluation from 1970 is typical: "[The *Flowers*] are unique in Warhol's production by virtue of their meaningless image content—a dubious honor shared only by the Cow Wallpaper and Silver Clouds in all of Warhol's oeuvre. They are and will remain strictly decorative, 'upper class wallpaper,' to use Henry Geldzahler's words."[3] In the 1960s and 1970s, the "decorative" was a category to be avoided at all costs,

1 Andy Warhol, untitled (*Cow Wallpaper*), 1966, screenprint on wallpaper. Installation view, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York. Photo: Rudolph Burkhardt.

for the application of the term to a work of art was an emasculating taunt that reduced it to an interior-design solution—a joke, really, in the discourse of art at the time invested in notions of formal and intellectual rigor. Robert Morris's recollection that "the great anxiety" for artists of the period was the potential for one's work to "fall into the decorative, the feminine, the beautiful, in short, the minor" captures the web of pejorative associations circling around the term.[4] This web of associations also includes "craft," a category of form often conflated with the decorative by virtue of its status as a supplement to the work of art.[5] Not only has wallpaper been classified as a craft at various moments in the history of art but the criticism leveled against it for being nothing but artifice, surface, or meaningless repetition is also applied to craft.[6]

Evidence suggests that the *Cow Wallpaper* was hardly a degraded form for Warhol. Indeed, it seems to have been something of a signature work for the artist, emblematic of the importance of the decorative in his oeuvre. For instance, in 1968, for an exhibition at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Warhol papered the facade of the building with the *Cow Wallpaper*. In 1971, Warhol asked that the *Cow Wallpaper* be the sole work exhibited in his Whitney Museum retrospective, a request

that was denied but that ultimately resulted in the compromise solution of hanging the *Cow Wallpaper* as the ground for the rest of the works in the show.[7] The effect might be described as one of high decorative density, complicating, much to his pleasure I am certain, wallpaper's normal status as background for art. Warhol would rehang the *Cow Wallpaper* with the *Flower* paintings in 1972 and use it again for the premiere of his portrait series of drag queens, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, in 1975.

In addition to the *Cow Wallpaper*, Warhol would go on to produce two more papers in the 1970s: the *Mao Wallpaper* of 1973 upon which he hung the *Mao* silkscreens, packing the Musée Galliera in Paris and subsequent venues with up to 1,951 images of the communist leader, and the *Self-Portrait Wallpaper* which he used in his retrospective in Zurich in 1978. And on at least one occasion he suggested to a sitter, the dealer Holly Solomon, that an arrangement of six of her portraits be installed in her home in combination with a wallpaper that also featured her repeated image.[8] Clearly, wallpaper in Warhol's oeuvre never functioned as just background; it was, rather, conceived as art itself.

This inventory of Warhol's use of wallpaper demonstrates an engagement with the medium that is difficult to dismiss as a minor, insignificant aspect of his artistic oeuvre. However, there has been no systematic explanation of its meaning or legacy. In this essay, I argue that Warhol's wallpapers can best be understood as an embrace of the decorative and especially of the decorative's association with effete homosexuality and femininity. While the connection between wallpaper, the decorative, and femininity is secured through women's traditional place in the domestic sphere as homemakers, it is the discourse of camp that links wallpaper, the decorative, and homosexuality. To Susan Sontag, "all the elements of visual décor make up a large part of Camp. For Camp . . . is often decorative art emphasizing texture, sensuous surface, and style. . . . Many examples of Camp [wallpaper conceivably among them] are things which, from a 'serious' point of view, are either bad art or kitsch."[9] Although barely addressed by Sontag, the origin of camp as a mode of appreciation for "bad" or marginalized forms as "good" is found in gay male culture. Among other features, this is a mode of appreciation that responds to homophobia and the normative social order through the inversion or deflation of the hierarchies, priorities, and values of straight or high culture.[10] Warhol's embrace of wallpaper is a camp elevation of this low, kitsch medium through which he managed both to signify queer identity and to destabilize the art world's rigid separa-

tion of high art and the decorative. Insofar as Warhol put wallpaper at the center of his installations, he turned this traditionally "background" medium into high art and in so doing signaled the triumph of decoration with all of its feminine and queer associations.

Warhol's marvelous description of himself as being "the wrong thing in the right space" implies that Warhol himself was as much out of place as his art within the norms of the avant-garde art world, dominated as it was by the image of the hard-drinking, manly man. In response to his friend Emile de Antonio's description of him as "swish," Warhol wrote, "I'd always had a lot of fun with that—just watching the expressions on people's faces. You'd have to have seen the way all the Abstract Expressionist painters carried themselves and the kinds of images they cultivated, to understand how shocked people were to see a painter coming on swish. I certainly wasn't a butch kind of guy by nature, but I must admit, I went out of my way to play up the other extreme."[11] Relishing his "swish" image, Warhol differentiated himself from the masculine, "butch" norms of artists of his time with the same glee with which he disrupted the norms of painting with his wallpaper. Warhol's overall legacy relates to his vast expansion of the domain of art through the inclusion of popular culture (wrong things in right places). However, the significance of his wallpaper works, in particular, consists in the way that this opposition can signify queerness (being wrong *en toto*). This is the legacy represented by artists working in wallpaper today such as Robert Gober and Virgil Marti, among others, who similarly activate the decorative as the queer.

WALLPAPER AND THE DECORATIVE

The earliest wallpapers, dating to the sixteenth century, were expensive, hand-painted specimens that held a respectable place within the arts.[12] With the advent of printed papers in the mid-nineteenth century, however, wallpaper eventually became the commercial product we know today: an unassuming background for more important furnishings and works of art or a substitute for expensive materials such as marble, leather, and silk.[13] As its availability increased, wallpaper's aesthetic status declined, but its lack of uniqueness was only partly responsible for its subordination in the hierarchy of the arts. Its place and function within the home as a single, dependent element in a larger ensemble of domestic furnishings sharply distinguishes it from "fine art," which, in the modernist conception, was constructed as autonomous or aesthetically free from the contingencies of the everyday world or its display. The rhetorical force of critical evaluations of modern painting as wallpaper turns on the preservation of this conception.

The earliest references to wallpaper in art criticism date from the late nineteenth century, when on more than one occasion it was used as a way to degrade painting deemed incomprehensible as "real" art. In 1874, for instance, the French critic Louis Leroy mocked Monet's *Impression, Sunrise* (1874), decrying, "Wallpaper in its embryonic state is more finished than that seascape."[14] One year later the British critic Tom Taylor would similarly evaluate two of Whistler's paintings from his *Nocturne* series, asserting that "they only come one step nearer pictures than delicately graduated tints on a wall paper would do."[15]

The discernible hostility in these comparisons between painting and wallpaper belies an anxiety surrounding modern art's potential slippage into a lesser decorative mode. The fear was that painting might be viewed not as a superior aesthetic form but as a type of interior decoration like any other. This is an anxiety that peaks again with the emergence of full-blown, large-scale abstraction in the late 1940s and 1950s. In fact, the most well-known equation between painting and wallpaper dates from this period. Harold Rosenberg used the invective "apocalyptic wallpaper" in 1952 to describe the kitsch effects of the new gestural abstraction when it was devoid of authentic feeling, when it was only decorative. "Works of this sort," he exclaimed, "lack the dialectical tension of a genuine act, associated with risk and will. . . . Satisfied with wonders that remain safely inside the canvas, the artist accepts the permanence of the commonplace and decorates it with his own daily annihilation. The result is apocalyptic wallpaper."[16]

The "all-over," drip paintings of Jackson Pollock were especially vulnerable to comparisons to wallpaper. In 1948, *Life* magazine published the proceedings of a round table on modern art in which Pollock's *Cathedral* was discussed with the following question in mind: "Is modern art, considered as a whole, a good or bad development? That is to say, is it something that responsible people can support, or may they neglect it as a minor and impermanent phase of culture?"[17] Predictably, one of the round-table participants, in this case the writer Aldous Huxley, likened *Cathedral* to wallpaper for its unorthodox treatment of space and surface. "It raises a question of why it stops when it does," he

remarked. "The artist could go on forever. (Laughter). I don't know. It seems like a panel for a wallpaper which is repeated indefinitely around the wall."[18]

In the history of modernist art criticism, however, it was Clement Greenberg who most expertly exploited comparisons between painting and wallpaper. Following his predecessors, Greenberg continued to use the term *wallpaper* as shorthand for *decoration* and the loss of aesthetic autonomy associated with this latter category. But unlike Huxley, who was suspicious of gestural abstraction because of its lack of compositional order, Greenberg was an advocate of the new, "all-over" picture, and his goal was to secure abstract painting *as* painting, that is, as high art. So rather than reduce abstract painting to wallpaper, Greenberg distinguished them from each other, elevating abstract features such as surface flatness above the merely decorative. "That such pictures," he asserted in 1948—referring to abstract paintings where "every part of the canvas [is] equivalent in stress to every other part"—"should escape collapsing into decoration, mere wallpaper patterns, is one of the miracles of art in our age, as well as a paradox that has become necessary to the age's greatest painting."[19] In the same year, on the occasion of Jackson Pollock's solo show at the Betty Parsons Gallery, he wrote, "As before, [Pollock's] new work offers a puzzle to all those not sincerely in touch with contemporary painting. I already hear: 'wall paper patterns,' 'the picture does not finish inside the canvas,' 'raw uncultivated emotion,' and so on, and so on. . . . It is Pollock's culture as a painter that has made him so sensitive and receptive to the tendency that has brought with it, in this case, a greater concentration of surface texture and tactile qualities, to balance the danger of monotony that arises from the even, all-over design."[20]

As late as 1961 Greenberg would still be defending the significance of Pollock's work by differentiating it from wallpaper: "By means of subtle variations within the minimal illusion of depth, [Pollock] is able . . . to inject dramatic and pictorial unity into patterns of color, shape, and line that would otherwise seem as repetitious as wallpaper."[21] In each instance, Greenberg lauds Pollock's unification of the surface, his practice of distributing pictorial incident across the canvas to the edge of the frame, a feature of his work that led other viewers, such as Huxley, to dismiss it as wallpaper, that is, as a failed example of painting experienced as mechanical in execution and composition. To Greenberg, Pollock's genius as a painter lay in his ability to wrench from the

decorative the flat, all-over surface and use it in the service of high art. This approach to Pollock's work afforded Greenberg the opportunity to shore up the fragile boundary separating abstract painting from decoration, albeit at the expense of a real class of objects—wallpaper and other decorative arts and crafts, which remained artless.

WARHOL AND WALLPAPER

One reason wallpaper held aesthetic interest for Warhol was its utter lack of aesthetic autonomy, and the artist's installations incorporating the material can be understood as all-out assaults on the modernist fetishization of the autonomous work of art. As archival photos of his exhibitions demonstrate, from the beginning of his career Warhol resisted the conventional installation of his works that in part preserved painting's credibility as high art rather than decoration. To take only one example, Warhol's installation of the *Campbell's Soup Cans* in 1962—one after another, along a ledge around the perimeter of the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles—mimicked the display of foodstuffs in the supermarket.[22] Benjamin Buchloh has characterized Warhol's use of serial repetition generally as a threat to the "boundaries of painting as an individual and complete pictorial unit."[23] Buchloh writes, "What had been a real difficulty for Pollock, the final aesthetic decision of how and where to determine the size of painterly action, or, as Harold Rosenberg put it, how to avoid crossing over into the production of 'apocalyptic wallpaper,' had now become a promise fulfilled by Warhol's deliberate transgression of those sacred limits."[24] As the ultimate attack on the sanctity of painting, wallpaper overturned the privileged place of originality, uniqueness, and autonomy essential to painting's superiority to decoration.

While recognizing that Warhol's wallpaper transgressed the boundaries of fine art, it is crucial to bring to light that this transgression was abetted by wallpaper's association with the decorative, the domestic, and the feminine. In 1966, when asked which made better settings for his paintings, homes or art galleries, Warhol retorted, "It makes no difference—it's just decoration."[25] In suggesting that art is just another form of decoration, Warhol breached the sacred divide between the domestic and the aesthetic; similarly his wallpaper productions repositioned the artist as an interior decorator, feminizing him through the medium's intimate association with the home and popular taste.

With this brazen celebration of decoration, Warhol's wallpapers can be read as a rejection of the heterosexual bravado relished in the image

of the male artist of the New York art world in the 1960s and 1970s, an extension of his artistic practice akin to "coming on swish." Warhol scholarship that attempts to recover the fact and significance of the artist's homosexuality to his work, including the queer contexts of its production and reception, supports the claim that his wallpapers are as much a signifier of sexual identity as they are an antipainting gesture.[26] Warhol's use of the phrase "disco décor" to categorize his *Shadows* of 1979, a series of paintings installed side-by-side around the perimeter of the Lone Star Foundation (formerly the Heiner Friedrich Gallery) in New York City, is another good example of this dual signification at play in a work conceived as a wallpaper-like, continuous surround.[27] The description "disco décor" was a double slam: not only did the word *décor* attempt to elevate the subordinate realm of the decorative but its coupling with the word *disco* served to celebrate the flamboyant world of 1970s queer identity.[28] As much as Warhol's wallpaper installations were interventions in the modernist hierarchy of media, his embrace of the decorative and its sites of deployment beg that they also be appreciated for their queerness.

WALLPAPER AND CONTEMPORARY INSTALLATION

In recent installation art, wallpaper has become something of a staple. Warhol's contribution to the expansion of the art world through the elevation of popular culture in his work is important to the emergence of installation generally, but the specific legacy of his wallpaper—its continued relevance more than forty years after its first appearance—lies in its ability to signify queerness.[29] In what follows, I'll examine the wallpapers of two artists, Robert Gober and Virgil Marti, whose work with the medium probes various aspects of identity and sexuality from a queer perspective. Additionally, I will reference the work of Christine Lidrbauch, an artist who has also worked with wallpaper, to illuminate the way the queer implications of the material intersect with contemporary feminist investigations of the decorative.

I begin, however, with an example of a wallpaper installation by the artist collective General Idea from the late 1980s (see fig. 2).[30] Titled *AIDS*, the installation is a double appropriation that keenly exposes wallpaper as a signifier of queerness and the centrality of Warhol to this operation. *AIDS* comprises a series of the collective's paintings of the acronym "AIDS" hung against a wallpaper of the same design. The work's serial repetition and decorative density directly recall Warhol's method

2 General Idea, *AIDS*, 1988, canvas mounted on wallpaper. Installation view, Galerie Stampa, Art Frankfurt. Courtesy AA Bronson.

of hanging multiples of the same image upon an identical wallpaper ground, as seen in, for example, the original installation of the *Mao* silkscreens against a corresponding wallpaper. In addition, the square format in which the letters A-I-D-S are compressed in two rows and the oblique counter of one letter, the D, was based on the well-known composition of Robert Indiana's iconic pop painting *LOVE* (1966). The significance of General Idea's *AIDS* wallpaper installation to my analysis of the decorative as the queer lies in its occupation and transformation of a felicitous catchphrase of the 1960s (Indiana's *LOVE*) and modes of presentation and materials categorized as decorative (Warhol's wallpapers and their installation). Here these elements are made over into an activist confrontation of the AIDS epidemic that in its larger public manifestation was instrumental to the political recuperation of the homophobic slur "queer" in the late 1980s.[31] This queering of Warhol's wallpaper installations continues in the work of Robert Gober and Virgil Marti.

Gober's first wallpapers were created for his show in 1989 at the Paula Cooper Gallery, an installation motivated, according to the artist, by a desire to "do natural history dioramas about contemporary human beings"[32] (see fig. 3). In one room, Gober hung a paper consisting of a disturbing repeat pattern based on found images of two men—one white and sleeping, the other black and lynched. A second room featured a wallpaper consisting of line drawings by Gober of male and female genitals in white against a black ground punctuated at eye level by metal drains.[33] Dispersed throughout the installation were a number of hand-fabricated objects made by the artist, including a bag of donuts on a pedestal, bags of cat litter propped against the wall, and a wedding gown.[34]

Gober's use of wallpaper for this installation trades on the medium's association with domestic intimacy and its conventional function as a decorative or background pattern. Like his earlier distorted playpens and beds, anthropomorphized sinks, and displaced drains, the wallpapers for this installation undermine a conception of the home as safe, pure, comfortable, or familiar by acting as a distorting mirror. Gober's wallpapers turn the *heimlich* into the uncanny through repeat patterns of obscene and violent imagery. What is reflected is a view of the processes of socialization, especially the internalization of normative identities and desires, as brutal and traumatic. For instance, the juxtaposition of the *Hanging Man/Sleeping Man Wallpaper* with the wedding gown prompts questions about how heterosexual fantasies, desires, and gender identifications are entwined with racial violence and sexual oppression. As a gay man, Gober's place within the world he has created in this installation is parallel to the historical relation of wallpaper to art, a place outside of it that threatens its existence. It is in their disguise as the familiar that his wallpapers function as queer, leading us back to what is known and normative but newly revealed as dangerous or damaging.

For his exhibition at the Jeu de Paume in Paris in 1991, Gober installed his third wallpaper, called *Forest*, based on a small watercolor of a New England forest. Gober flipped the reproduction in four directions, creating a kaleidoscopic effect.[35] In this kaleidoscopic effect of the wallpaper, a fracturing of its image created through mirrors, the queer once again comes into play by destabilizing normative conceptions of identity and desire. Applied to or emerging from the paper are three wax sculptures of body parts of a Caucasian male: a pair of buttocks embellished with a musical score and two pairs of legs placed shins down,

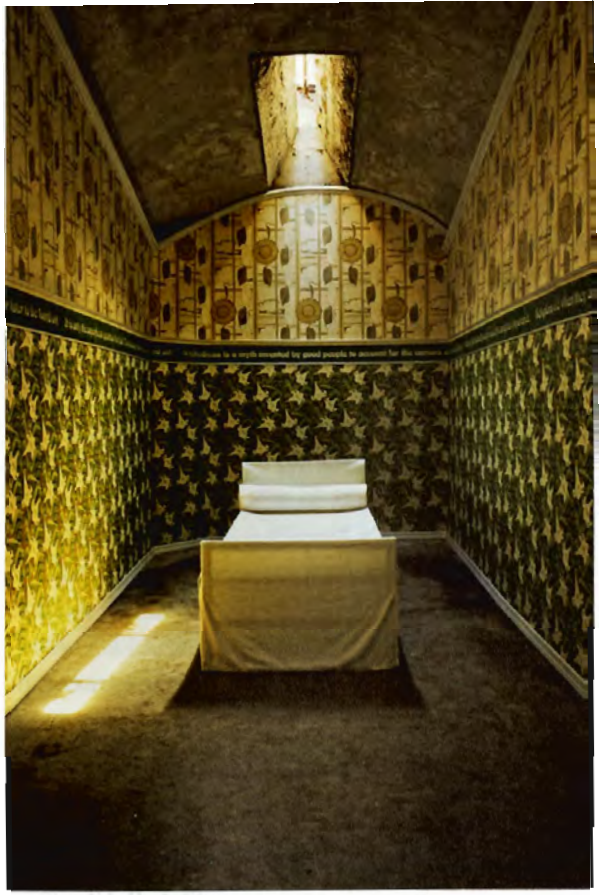
3 Robert Gober, untitled, 1989. Installation view, Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, September 30 to October 28, 1989. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Andrew Moore.

one clothed in pants and black oxfords with three protruding candles, the other in white briefs and sneakers perforated with flesh-colored drains.[36] One's experience of the wallpaper and the topsy-turvy landscape it represents shifts in relation to these sculptures, which speak to the body's multiple pleasures and anxieties, including the homoerotic delights of the flesh represented by the ass and its musical score; the juxtaposition of underpants and bared legs; the disgust associated with the drain and its connections to bodily orifices, waste, or disease; and the candle's simultaneous reference to the erect penis and the commemoration of loved ones lost to AIDS. The vertiginous distortions of the wallpaper and the effect of disorientation it produces in relation to these works heightens delight or dread, sometimes both simultaneously, destabilizing the notion of the body and its wishes as contained and uncomplicated.

Gober's *Forest* paper was followed by a wall mural, also of a forest, for his installation at the Dia Center for the Arts in 1993. Although not a paper, there is no meaningful difference between it and the earlier *Forest* printed on paper. Like wallpaper, the scene repeats and was produced by professional scenic painters in a paint-by-numbers approach that approximates the flat, schematic style of a printed paper or backdrop.[37] In this work, the wallpaper plays a key role in Gober's exploration of the opposition between "nature" and "culture" within which the artist framed, among other issues, the cultural, religious, and governmental containment of homosexuality. The landscape surround in the piece plays a crucial role in this exploration; as in *Forest*, it is an artistic projection of nature. It also represents the natural source of water diverted into homes (flowing into sinks in the installation) as well as the paper pulp transformed into the newspapers stacked in and around the piece, again a transformation of the natural into the cultural. Finally, in a manner seen in his previous uses of wallpaper, the windows cut through the landscape obstructed with prison bars shift the relation of the natural to the cultural in the opposite direction, undermining any tidy construction of categories by which one may be judged: straight/gay, high/low, inside/outside.

Virgil Marti began working with wallpaper in 1992, and many of his installations utilizing the medium deal explicitly with homosexual identity. From Marti's large number of installations employing wallpaper I have selected three examples, *Bullies* of 1992, *For Oscar Wilde* of 1995, and *Grow Room 3* of 2004, all of which encapsulate much that is characteristic of his installation practice and link it to Warhol's projection of the decorative as the queer. For *Bullies*, Marti inserted the yearbook pictures of tough boys he both feared and desired in junior high school within flocked, glow-in-the-dark garland borders. The paper's first installation was in an isolated boiler room of a former Philadelphia elementary school, a site that evoked various traumatic memories ranging from peer harassment to awkward sexual encounters.[38] Although the paper appropriates the pattern of a French toile, its black velvety surface and psychedelic effects best recall trends in domestic interior decor of the 1970s, an aesthetic that characterizes many of Marti's wallpapers and installations. This too is wrapped up in Marti's retrospective exploration of the evolution of his identity as a homosexual. About the "low" aesthetic style of his wallpapers Marti has stated: "Questioning my own *good* taste and attempting to regain a more innocent state of purely *liking*, I see as analogous to the process of unlearning the dominant tastes and attitudes that contributed to the alienation I felt while I was growing up."[39] In undercutting the masculine aggressiveness of the boys pictured in the wallpaper with a flamboyant decorative pattern, Marti draws a connection between the decorative's association with femininity and its subordination to art that is inspired by Warhol's own embrace of imagery outside dominant good taste.

Marti's *For Oscar Wilde* (see fig. 4), a site-specific installation in and around a prison cell in Philadelphia's defunct Eastern State Penitentiary, draws on a connection between queerness and wallpaper to commemorate the life and work of the Irish playwright. The piece was composed of a garden of live sunflowers marking the prison entrance and a large arrangement of silk lilies in full bloom at the entrance to a single cell outfitted with a small bed covered in pristine white velveteen and two wallpapers—a dado of lilies and an upper design of sunflowers—separated by a stringcourse featuring the author's pithy pronouncements. The installation directly references Wilde's criminal prosecution for "gross indecency" in 1895, resulting in his imprisonment for two years, and his subsequent self-imposed exile in Paris where shortly before his death in 1900 he was quoted as saying, "My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or the other of us has got to go."[40] The installation's use of live and artificial flowers, its embrace of decorative embellishment as art, and its self-conscious stylization of nature also reference Wilde as a leading artist of aestheticism, a movement which championed the purpose of art as a beautiful, refined, or sensuous pleasure



4 Virgil Marti, *For Oscar Wilde*, 1995, silkscreen printed wallpaper, cotton velveteen, and iron bed. Installation view, Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia. Courtesy of the artist.

over any utilitarian or didactic function that connected it to everyday life. The aesthetic movement's embrace of "Art for Art's Sake," that is, its essential uselessness, encompassed an elevation of the decorative arts and interior design in the late Victorian period, redressing the subordination of ornament in the hierarchy of the arts. These transgressions of the aesthetic movement may be connected to Wilde's challenge to Victorian social mores regarding homosexuality. Damned as decadent and unnatural for falling outside the procreative imperative, homosexual sex was also perceived as a form of uselessness—a uselessness, however, that Wilde publicly defended in his trial as of the highest good, a love that "is as pure as it is perfect."[41]

Marti's wallpaper installation, *Grow Room 3*, for the 2004 Whitney Biennial, trades in a subversive nostalgia similar to *Bullies*.[42] For this work Marti installed panels of shiny, reflective Mylar printed with a pattern of free-style macramé webs and dazzling flowers. Hung within the

space are multicolored Venetian-style chandeliers in cast resin featuring antlers tipped with fake flowers. The exquisite effect created by the Mylar and sparkling chandeliers recalls the vogue for mirrored rooms and reflective wallpapers of the 1970s. Mylar is also a material popular among indoor cultivators of marijuana, and the irregular webs are based on the patterns woven by spiders under the influence of psychotropic drugs. The flowers too have a vividness and intensity suggestive of improved growing conditions. Over and above the nostalgic references to home decor of his suburban youth and dreamlike memories of its perfection, Marti's *Grow Room 3* is a visually stunning exploration of beauty and artificiality produced through the intertwining of high and low culture rather than their opposition, a symbiotic pairing essential to Warhol's decorative aesthetic as well.

For artists with explicit feminist intentions, there remains a strong tendency to use wallpaper to address the deep-rooted cultural associations between the decorative and the feminine that informed, in part and unconsciously, the negative reception of Warhol's wallpaper. As such, feminist works utilizing wallpaper ought to be considered first cousins to the queer. Christine Lidrbauch's *Menstrual Blood Wallpaper* of 1991 provides a striking example of this affiliation.[43]

In her analysis of what she called the "gendering of the detail" from antiquity to the modern era, the literary theorist Naomi Schor demonstrated the association of woman with the visual mode of decoration or ornamentation that cast feminine taste as lacking in balance, measure, and meaning.[44] Schor explains the danger of the decorative, or, as she calls it, the detail: The "ornamental style point[s] to what is perhaps most threatening about the detail: its tendency to subvert an internal hierarchic ordering of the work of art which clearly subordinates the periphery to the center, the accessory to the principal, the foreground to the background."[45] Lidrbauch's work addresses the tenacious association of a debased or menacing detail with the feminine along the lines investigated by Schor.[46] Through the adoption of wallpaper, a "low," "craft" medium associated with the domestic sphere, patterned with an unmentionable trace of the female body, Lidrbauch repositions the marginal and the culturally contemptible as the subject of her work. More generally, her use of wallpaper is an ironic challenge to sexist cultural beliefs about women's intellectual and creative deficiencies partly informed by the hierarchy of art and craft and the traditionally low status of women's artistic production within it.[47] In reappropriating the con-

nection between the feminine and the decorative, Lidrbauch's wallpaper continues to address the tacit sexism of the modernist opposition of abstract painting to wallpaper.

In introducing wallpaper into a "high art" context, Warhol's object of critique was the demotion of painting's privileged position in the hierarchy of the arts and the pure aesthetic experience traditionally associated with its exhibition. Indeed, he used the double installation of the *Cow Wallpaper* and *Silver Clouds* to announce the end of his career as a painter. Warhol's use of wallpaper also functioned as a signifier for queerness. Artists such as Robert Gober, Virgil Marti, and Christine Lidrbauch, among others, continue Warhol's legacy, which consisted of both intervening in hierarchies of the high/low and in celebrating the decorative as a specifically queer form. Warhol's understanding of himself as "the wrong thing in the right space" not only conjures up how wallpaper and queerness can both be wrong things in the right space; it also prompts us to question what makes for wrong things and right spaces generally when it comes to art and sexual identity.

NOTES

1. Thomas B. Hess, "Reviews and Previews: Andy Warhol," *ArtNews*, January 1965, 11.
2. The image of the cow was based on a photograph reproduced in an agricultural publication.
3. Rainer Crone, *Andy Warhol* (New York: Praeger, 1970), 30. David Bourdon quotes Geldzahler in his review "Andy Warhol," *Village Voice*, December 3, 1964.
4. Robert Morris, "Size Matters," *Critical Inquiry* 26, no. 3 (spring 2000): 478.
5. On the subject, see Glenn Adamson, *Thinking through Craft* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), chap. 1. See also Elissa Auther, "The Decorative, Abstraction, and the Hierarchy of Art and Craft in the Art Criticism of Clement Greenberg," *Oxford Art Journal* 27, no. 3 (2004): 339–64.
6. For example, the Arts and Crafts movement embraced wallpaper as a craft.
7. Warhol altered the color scheme of the wallpaper for the installation, replacing the pink on lemon yellow combination with red on violet.
8. See Charles F. Stuckey, "Warhol in Context," *The Work of Andy Warhol*, ed. Gary Garrels (Seattle: Bay, 1989), 20. Stuckey suggests that the idea for the Solomon wallpaper predates the production of the *Cow Wallpaper*. His essay is a rare and valuable accounting of Warhol's embrace of art as a form of decoration and his distinctive installations in which wallpaper plays a signature role. My analysis is indebted to Stuckey' groundwork on this topic. See also Charles F. Stuckey, "Andy Warhol's Painted Faces," *Art in America* (May 1980): 102–11.
9. Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966), 278. Of course, as full historical studies of wallpaper will show, it is not *just* camp. What Warhol and other artists using wallpaper demonstrate, however, is that aspects of it—for instance, its artificiality—can be experienced as camp.
10. Cleto Fabio, ed., *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing of the Subject* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).
11. Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *POPism: The Warhol Sixties* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), 13.
12. See Geert Wisse, "Manifold Beginnings: Single-Sheet Papers," *The Papered Wall: History, Pattern, Techniques*, ed. Lesley Hoskins (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1994), 8–21.
13. The invention of steam-powered cylinders in the 1840s allowed for printing on continuous paper. See Catherine Lynn, *Wallpaper in America, from the Seventeenth Century to World War I* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980). See also Nancy McClelland, *Historic Wall Papers, from Their Inception to the Introduction of Machinery* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1924).
14. Leroy wrote for the satirical journal *Le Charivari*. In his review of the first impressionist exhibition, Leroy visits the exhibition with the interlocutor M. Joseph Vincent, an academic landscape painter whose hysterical reaction to impressionist brushwork and composition represented the mainstream art world's and general public's indignation toward the new style of painting. For the full text of the review, see Linda Nochlin, *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, 1874–1904: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1966), 10–14.
15. Tom Taylor, "Winter Exhibitions: The Dudley," *London Times*, December 2, 1875, 4. See Catherine Carter Goebel, "Arrangement in Black and White: The Making of a Whistler Legend," Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1988, 827. Taylor testified against Whistler in *Whistler v. Ruskin* and reiterated this evaluation, adding that "if you bring art down to delicacy of tone, it is only like the tone of wallpaper." See Linda Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial in* Whistler v. Ruskin (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 179 ff.
16. Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters," *Artnews*, December 1952, 21–22. For a discussion of wallpaper and abstraction prior to abstract expressionism, see Christine Poggi, *In Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism, and the Invention of Collage* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992), chap. 5.
17. See "A *Life* Round Table on Modern Art," *Life*, October 11, 1948, 62.
18. Ibid.
19. Clement Greenberg, "Review of an Exhibition of Mordecai Ardon-Bronstein and a Discussion of the Reaction in America to Abstract Art" (1948), *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 2, *Arrogant Purpose: 1945–1949*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 217.
20. Clement Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of Worden Day, Carl Holty and Jackson Pollock" (1948), *Arrogant Purpose*, 201.
21. Clement Greenberg, "The Jackson Pollock Market Soars" (1961), *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 4, *Modernism with a Vengeance*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 110. Greenberg's final use of the distinction between wallpaper and Pollock's work occurs in

"Jackson Pollock: 'Inspiration, Vision, Intuitive Decision'" (1967), *Modernism with a Vengeance*, 246.

22. Charles Stuckey reports that it was Irving Blum, not Warhol, who conceived of installing the "Campbell's Soup Cans" on a ledge around the walls of the gallery. See Charles F. Stuckey, "Warhol in Context," 25 n. 4, in *The Work of Andy Warhol*, ed. Gary Garrels (Seattle: Bay, 1989). Warhol's practice of deliberately arranging units of work on top of his wallpapers is part of this pattern of resistance as well.

23. Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "Andy Warhol's One-Dimensional Art: 1956–1966," *Andy Warhol: a Retrospective*, ed. Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989), 56.

24. Ibid.

25. L. M. Butler, "Andy Warhol—The Man and His Art Challenge Definition," *Boston after Dark*, October 1966, as quoted by Charles Stuckey, "Warhol in Context," 19.

26. See in particular Jennifer Doyle, Jonathan Flatley, and José Esteban Muñoz, eds., *Pop Out, Queer Warhol* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996). See also Jennifer Doyle, "Queer Wallpaper," *A Companion to Contemporary Art Since 1945*, ed. Amelia Jones (London: Blackwell, 2006), 343–55; Kenneth Silver, "Modes of Disclosure: The Construction of Gay Identity and the Rise of Pop Art," *Hand-Painted Pop: An American Art in Transition, 1955–62*, ed. Russell Ferguson (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1992), 179–203; Bradford Collins, "Dick Tracy and the Case of Warhol's Closet," *American Art* (fall 2001): 54–79; and Richard Meyer, *Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

27. Andy Warhol, "Painter Hangs Own Paintings," *New York*, February 5, 1979, 9. As quoted by Charles F. Stuckey, "Andy Warhol's Painted Faces," 105. The *Shadows* consists of eighty-three large-scale paintings of a shadow in seventeen color variations conceived to be installed continuously and low to the ground around the perimeter of the gallery. There is evidence, albeit conflicting, that Warhol shipped a continuous roll of canvas for his second show at the Ferus Gallery in 1964 consisting of the *Elvis* silkscreens and asked for them to be hung as a continuous surround, an effect that also would have produced obvious associations to wallpaper. See Buchloh, "Andy Warhol's One-Dimensional Art," 56. Stuckey claims that Warhol instructed Blum to cut the roll into individual paintings, mount them on stretchers, and hang them "edge to edge—densely around the gallery." See Stuckey, "Warhol in Context," 11.

28. For the reader suspicious of the equation between the discotheque and nonnormative sexuality, consider the "Disco Sucks" campaign of the late 1970s, which culminated in the burning of thousands of disco records at a Chicago White Sox game at Comiskey Park on June 12, 1979. The so-called Disco Demolition Night was part of a larger radio campaign that pitted macho rock lovers against disco and was viewed by many as a thinly veiled assault on the gay liberation and black pride movements of the day. On the subject, see Tim Lawrence, *Love Saves the Day: A History of American Dance Music Culture* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003).

29. Although the list of artists using wallpaper is extensive, little sustained analysis of the use of the medium in contemporary art exists. One recent attempt to redress this lack of attention to the medium is the survey exhibition "On the Wall: Contemporary Wallpaper and Tableau" organized by Marion Boulton Stroud for the Fabric Workshop and Museum in 2003. This exhibition was a companion to "On the Wall: Wallpaper by Contemporary Artists," curated by Judith Tannenbaum for the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art. Both exhibitions are documented in Judith Tannenbaum and Marion Boulton Stroud, *On the Wall: Contemporary Wallpaper* (Providence: Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art and Philadelphia: Fabric Workshop and Museum, 2003). See also the catalogue for the Wexner Center for the Art's "Apocalyptic Wallpaper," an exhibition in 1997 of wallpaper installations by Robert Gober, Abigail Lane, Virgil Marti, and Andy Warhol: *Apocalyptic Wallpaper: Robert Gober, Abigail Lane, Virgil Marti, and Andy Warhol* (Columbus, Ohio: Wexner Center for the Arts, 1997).

30. The wallpaper was produced by General Idea in 1988 and is based on a composition from 1987 that functioned as a logo of sorts in numerous AIDS awareness campaigns and public demonstrations. General Idea, founded in 1969 by A. A. Bronson, Felix Partz, and Jorge Zontal, was in existence until 1994, the year Partz and Zontal succumbed to AIDS.

31. On the recuperation of the term *queer*, see Douglas Crimp and Adam Rolston, *AIDS Demographics* (Seattle: Bay, 1990).

32. Robert Gober, "Interview with Richard Flood," *Robert Gober*, ed. Lewis Biggs (Liverpool: Serpentine Gallery; London: Tate Gallery, 1993), 13.

33. The image of the sleeping man and hanged man was used by Gober in several other contexts before the production of the wallpaper. The drawings for the *Male and Female Genital Wallpaper* were originally produced for the endpapers of a book designed by Gober for the story *Heat* by Joyce Carol Oates as part of the Whitney Museum's artist/writer publishing program in 1990. See Richard Flood, "Robert Gober: Special Editions, An Interview," *The Print Collector's Newsletter* 21, no. 1 (March–April 1990): 7.

34. The room papered with the *Hanging Man/Sleeping Man Wallpaper* contained the wedding gown and bags of cat litter. The bag of donuts on a pedestal was installed in the room papered with the *Male and Female Genital Wallpaper*.

35. For details of the work's conception, see Richard Flood's interview of Gober in *Robert Gober: Sculpture + Drawing* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1999), 125.

36. Placed in the center of the gallery was a sculpture of a six-foot-long cigar after René Magritte's painting *The State of Grace* (1959). Regarding drains in Gober's work, see Helen Molesworth, "Stops and Starts," *October* 92 (spring 2000): 157–62; and David Joselit, "Poetics of the Drain," *Art in America* 85, no. 12 (December 1997): 64–70.

37. For details of the installation's construction, see Richard Flood's interview of Gober, 127.

38. The site is now called the Philadelphia Community Education Center.

39. As quoted by Lia Gangitano in the exhibition pamphlet for *Hot Tub*, an installation by Marti for the Thread Waxing Space in 1998.

40. The title of the piece too, *For Oscar Wilde*, is a reference to the message on the calling card—"For Oscar Wilde, posing as a Sodomite"—left by the father of

Wilde's lover, Lord Alfred Douglas, at Wilde's family club. Wilde attempted to sue for libel and was subsequently charged and convicted of "gross indecency."

41. Quoted in H. Montgomery Hyde, *The Trials of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Dover, 1973), 201.

42. See *Whitney Biennial 2004* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2004), 207.

43. A detail of the work is illustrated in *Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in Feminist Art History*, ed. Amelia Jones (Los Angeles: Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

44. Naomi Schor, *Reading in Detail: Aesthetics and the Feminine* (New York: Methuen, 1987).

45. Ibid., 20.

46. Elaine Reichek's installation *A Post-Colonial Kinderhood* (1994), and Patricia Cronin's installation *Pony Tales* (2000), both of which incorporate wallpaper, might also be provocatively explored along these lines. See Norman Kleeblatt, ed., *Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities* (New York: Jewish Museum, 1996); and Patricia Cronin, "What a Girl Wants," *Art Journal* (winter 2001): 91–97. See also Nicole Eisenman's wallpaper included in the Fabric Workshop and Museum's exhibition "On the Wall: Wallpaper and Tableau."

47. For a detailed analysis of the categorization of women's art as decorative or craft and the groundbreaking feminist critique of this categorization by Miriam Schapiro, Harmony Hammond, Faith Ringgold, and Judy Chicago, see Elissa Auther, *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), chap. 3.