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AR 311 AMERICAN ART II

IS GEORGE SEGAL A POP ARTIST ?

Submitted by

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INTRODUCTION

We Americans, perhaps because of our industrial approach, tend to categorize everything with which we come in contact. This tendency while helping our efficiency does have the potential for much harm. When we apply our industrial attitudes to such things as art and art movements, we often lose perspective of the individuals involved and their specific contributions. Many artists have been grouped into so-called movements for such insufficient reasons as producing during a certain time period. The end result is that our desire for expediency has done a real injustice to the artists, their philosophies, and their work. To treat art, or any individual effort, with the same approach as a parts warehouse handles inventory control is to deny those elements that society finds valuable.

The problem of understanding where an individual fits in relation to his peers and history is best solved by examining the definitions of a movement along with the work and philosophies of the individuals truly working in that particular style; then compare and contrast the artist in question with all the data.

George Segal has been labeled a Pop Artist, but does that label do the artist or his work justice? A careful

examinition of the recognized practitioners, and philoso-
phies of this movement compared to the work and philoso-
phies of Segal may help us accept or reject his inclu-
sion in this movement of modern art.[1]

POP ART HISTORY AND ATTITUDES

We need to look at the movement of Pop Art in historical perspective to understand why it gained status as an art movement and then at its subject matter to understand its motivation. Alloway has stated that our twentieth-century aesthetics are derived from the eighteenth-century separation of the arts when "Art was strictly defined as pure painting, sculpture, architecture, music, or poetry, and nothing but these five media could be properly classified as fine art."[2] There was a general attitude that popular art was a destructive influence, as many today feel that television is a destructive influence. Popular art grew as its methods of production grew. This growth led to a greater separation in attitude as to what is or is not fine art. Many artists touched on popular subject matter. The Impressionists, for instance, "avoided high art subjects, and they adopted a new attitude towards cheap prints and photography."[3] And the Dada movement has been regarded as a precursor to Pop Art.

One of the earliest, and perhaps most forceful, statements on the relationship between objects and artistic status was Marcel Duchamp's readymades. The Fountain by R. Mutt or his In Advance Of A Broken Arm (snow shovel) presented the public with the problem of what is art and

what is the correct subject matter of art. This attitude coupled with the postwar industrialization of America and the rest of the world set the stage.

> Duchamp had made the readymade object into art; now Johns went further and made the object into a painting, challenging the mainline collage tradition in which the actual common object or picture was added to the surface, fragmented, disguised or otherwise subjugated to a foriegn aesthetic. Once it was realized that the question "Is it a flag or is it a painting?" had no answer--was not important--the way was wide open for Pop Art.[4]

Several artists experimented with Pop subject matter independently at the same time. In 1960, Andy Warhol did a painting of the cartoon character, Popeye, and Roy Lichtenstein in the following year made his first painting of comic book characters showing Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck in a piece called Look Mickey.[5]

The attempt has been to take Duchamp's original challenge and explore common objects with the seriousness of any problem an artist would set for himself and his work.

DEFINITION

> Pop or pop art: n art in which commonplace
> objects (as road signs, hambergers, comic
> strips, or soup cans) are used as subject
> matter and are often physically incorpor-
> ated in the work - pop artist n[6]

The attempt to define Pop Art is not a precise pro-

cess as the definition from 6,000 Words a supplement to

Websters Third New International Dictionary would lead

one to believe. Lawrence Alloway quotes from The Random

House Dictionary of the English Language (Unabridged Ed.):

[Pop Art is] "a style, esp. of figurative painting, devel-

oped in the U.S. and current in the early 1960's, charac-

terized chiefly by magnified forms and images derived

from such commercial art genres as comic strips and adver-

tising posters."[7]

Since there is, if not a difference of opinion, some

question as to the perimeters of Pop Art even among dic-

tionaries, we must also consider opinions of those people

associated with the movement. Mr. Alloway in his book,

American Pop Art, devotes an entire chapter to the defin-

ition of Pop Art. He concludes that Pop Art is not a point

but a cluster that will include at least one of the

following:

> 1. Syntactic complexity: under this heading
>   belong the interplay of written and pictoral

forms, such as Johns' letters, numerals, or words, and Indiana's numbers and sentences.

2. Range of media: Rauschenberg's combine-paintings (which relate to assemblage and to Happenings in their incorporation of diverse objects); extension of medium, as in the case of Rosenquist introducing billboard techniques into experimental easel painting.

3. Familiarity of subjects: (Lichtenstein's comics or Warhol's newsprint sources); the literal presence of the object (Wesselman's bathrooms and Dine's objects attached to canvases).

4. Connections with technology: Rauschenberg in particular, but machines are also an essential term of Oldenburg's metamorphic forms.[8]

Using this as a definition of Pop Art, one could, without much trouble, make a case to include many artists who although their work may fit one or more of the criteria that Alloway has set forth are definitely not Pop Artists. Picasso comes immediately to mind (The Absinthe Glass, Goat Skull and Bottle); these works and others easily fit the criteria of familiarity of subjects and connections with technology but that does not make Picasso a Pop Artist.

Compton has approached the matter from a stylistic point of view saying:

> The most striking formal characteristics of most Pop painting are flatness and 'frontality', centrality, repetition, and sheer scale, plus everything that results from the use of or imitation of readymade images and techniques of mechanical production.[9]

Lucy Lippard felt that:

> Pop chose to depict everything previously
> considered unworthy of notice, let alone art;
> every level of advertising, magazine and news-
> paper illustration, Times Square jokes, taste-
> less bric-a-brac and gaudy furnishings, ordin-
> ary clothes and food, film stars, pin-ups,
> cartoons.[10]

Sterling McIlhany states that:

> Pop is an art of realism because it belongs to
> the oldest and most vigorous tradition in
> American art: the broad field of advertising.
> Before the advent of pop art, most artists
> drew a sharp line between the commercial art
> of mass culture and the fine arts. The for-
> mer represented a hard-sell world of flashy
> billboards, supermarket posters, slick mag-
> azine ads, brand name packaging, and window
> displays, as well as the breathless fantasy of TV
> commercials, popular fiction, movie magazines,
> and comic strips, the rich material of America's
> popular (pop) culture.[11]

It seems that everyone has a slightly different
attitude as to what constitutes Pop Art. In each defin-
ition or statement there are similar themes or specific
points which are repeated; if we take those specifics
that occur in more than one statement we will have some
common criteria with which to judge an individual and his
work to see if they belong to Pop Art.

For the purposes of this paper then the following
will be the criteria as to the subject matter of Pop Art:

> 1. Familiar or common objects, however, not just
>
>   any common object but those that exist as
>
>   common because of mass production

2. The use of scale or magnified form

3. Reference to, or the use of mass-media and
   its production techniques

The last criterion is the one most often mentioned
in the descriptions and as such should probably carry the
most weight in any evaluation.

PRACTITIONERS OF POP

> There are so many misconceptions about what is
> or is not Pop Art that for the purposes of the
> following discussion I should say that I admit
> to only five hard-core Pop Artists in New York,
> and a few more on the West Coast and in England.
> The New York five, in order of their commitment
> to these principles, are: Andy Warhol, Roy Lich-
> tenstein, Tom Wesselman, James Rosenquist and
> Claes Oldenburg.[12]

Andy Warhol could perhaps be considered the father
of Pop Art because of his use of images and production
techniques that relate totally to the pop culture. His
famous piece, Campbell's Soup Can, is a common mass-
produced package printed by modern mass production tech-
niques. While the arrangement of the image--or images in
his repetitive prints--and the color may vary, they remain
icons of our supermarket culture. The questioning pro-
cess that Warhol has set up, as to what is art and who is
the artist, has gone from the painted image to the mass-
produced image to Warhol buying actual cans of soup (which
he and his assistant signed) to people buying cans of soup
and displaying them as art objects. The realm that Warhol
is exploring is one of philosophy and aesthetics, a con-
tinuation of Duchamp's attitude and the offering of an
anti-art.

Roy Lichtenstein has taken the commercial image of the comic strip and explored its status as a fine art by using a change of scale. He uses paint and canvas reproducing by hand the image of the commercial technique of Ben Day dots. Although he is concerned mainly with problems of scale and composition; "Once I have established what the subject matter is going to be, I'm not interested in that."[13] His source material for his paintings is the comic strip.

Tom Wesselman in the Great American Nude series is commenting on the society that prefers plastic imitations and mass-produced reproductions to the real thing. The kind of society that derives its aesthetic from the hardware store. He is also making the statement that sex or the intimation of sex is ever-present in the images we receive from mass-media. The questioning of traditional roles for painting and sculpture is explored in this series by combining actual objects with areas painted to look like related objects and reproductions of still other objects applied to the surface of these three-dimensional collages.

James Rosenquist, drawing on his background as a billboard painter has distilled the images of the commercial ads, fragmentized, exploded to huge scale, and re-arranged them to achieve a kaleidoscope of imagery. His is an art of composition. The images are from pop culture

but the art is one of abstraction. However, the force
of his work is still related to the viewer knowing the
images have been abstracted and this recognition is only
derived from mass media.

Claes Oldenburg, the only sculptor that Lucy Lippard
recognizes as a Pop Artist, [14] is perhaps the one person
who has thrown our culture in our faces. He has taken
everyday objects (much like Duchamp) and brought them to
our attention through the use of a new scale and alien
materials, such as the Soft Toilet of 1966 or Sundae of
1963.

All of these artists are concerned with symbols,
change of scale, a flattening of the work, the commercial
aspects of the image or its production, and a general
attitude of non-involvement or aloofness from the work.
These artists are trying to present popular culture as
it exists around them in an isolating, emphasizing, non-
emotional manner.

GEORGE SEGAL

It must be remembered that George Segal was a
painter before he involved himself with sculpture.[15]
The move to sculpture grew out of a need to explore space
in ways that seemed, at least to Segal, impossible with
paint.

> I left a path of my own dissatisfaction in
> my painting, alternately accepting and reject-
> ing expressionism, geometric structure, fig-
> uration, transformation--and the decision to
> enter literal space was determined by strong
> urges for total experience.[16]

Segal, as opposed to Pop Artists, was not concerned
with the flattening of space in his work, but of moving it
into the third dimension. In his use of everyday scenes
Segal is not commenting on the mass-media culture with
cool aloof distance from his work; he is reacting with
emotion to people and their situations. When asked to
what degree his figures were portraits he replied:

> To a great degree, since the models are gener-
> ally friends who haven't commissioned me to
> make a portrait of them. They are portraits;
> yet, I do not do details by which we ordinarily
> recognize people. They're portraits in the
> same way that you recognize a friend walking
> down the street from a block away.[17]

This is not to say that Segal was isolated from his
contemporaries; he was "a sympathetic observer of the
environments and Happenings of Red Grooms, Robert Whitman,

Claes Oldenburg, and Jim Dine.[18] Segal's work does
not lack emotion, on the contrary his work is a comment
on the emotions of the people he knows and with whom he
associates.

> I usually make sculptures of people I know
> very well in situations that I've known them in.
> And if that involves a luncheonette counter,
> places in the house or other places where I go;
> gas stations, bus stations, streets farm build-
> ings--this must all do with my experience.[19]

In considering Segal's work in comparison to the
criteria we have established for the Pop movement, let's
use his piece, The Gas Station, 1964 (Fig. 1). Our consid-
eration is with the object (common because of mass-produc-
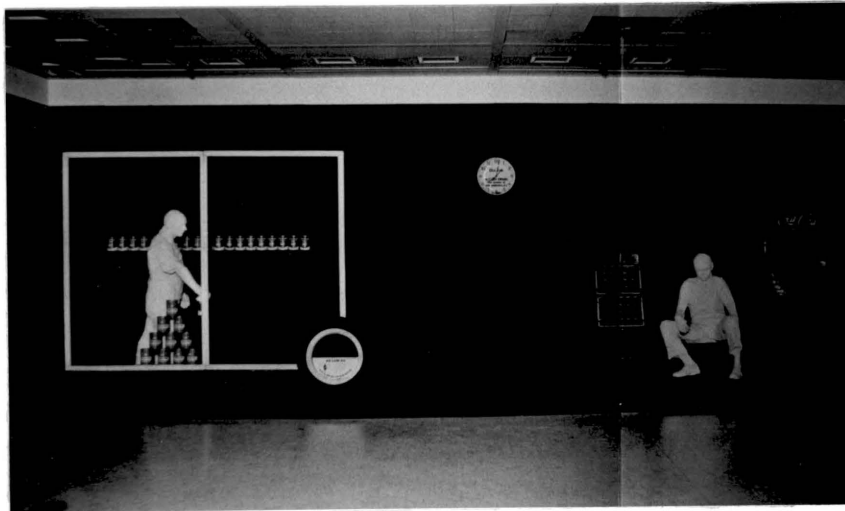tion).

Fig. 1 George Segal, The Gas Station, 1964.

In the piece there are a Coke machine, bottle racks and
cases, a clock, a tire, cans of oil, a window frame, and
two plaster figures. The argument runs that because such

common and mass-produced objects as Coke and cans of oil
are in the sculpture, then it must be a Pop piece. What
one must consider, is not the use of the objects, but the
intent in their use. Is Segal attempting to make us see
the icons of Coke or oil cans in a new way through the
use of repetition as Warhol might, or is he commenting
on our social fetishes by presenting these items in an
alien material as Oldenburg would, or is he using frag-
ments of these images (combined with other fragmented
advertising pictures) in a comment on society and mass-
media as Rosenquist has? Is Segal commenting on common
objects at all? Of course not. George Segal has pre-
sented to the viewer a scene from life; one with which
(as in all his pieces) he is very familiar. The impor-
tant elements are not the supportive material, but the
figures themselves. The analysis may be one of isola-
tion, or people in the same situation but unaware of the
others' existences, or of human beings frozen in time
with no past and no future; the important point is that
the figures are the central definitive statement. Of
course there will be a question as to the size of the
piece and that being one of Pop's devices, but it must be
remembered that this is sculpture in the purest sense.
Life-sized scale has been rather standard since Greece; in
fact, many works of sculpture (such as Rodin's Study for

Balzac, c. 1895, 9'10") have been produced on a super
human scale.

The objects that Segal uses in his works are not
comments on the objects, but comments on the person whose
portrait is being presented. Segal is merely adding the
details that will give the viewer an insight as to the
personality captured in plaster. One could not imagine
a cardinal painted without his robes, or a cavalry off-
icer being sculpted without his horse.

> What is important is the way the figure sits,
> leans, hunches, sprawls, on that box, over that
> sink, in that doorway; figure and objects hang
> together and cooperate in reminding us of an
> experience, creating a mood.[20]

In the discussion as to whether Segal is a Pop art-
ist we must consider his work as a whole, examining several
pieces, to understand his direction and intent. While he
may make one or a few pieces that may be misinterpreted
as Pop, his work, when examined for main ideas and elements,
shows this not to be the case. First of all, every piece
Segal has done involves the human figure. He has presen-
ted the figure with sensitivity, concern, a sensuality
that is not the exploitation, dehumanization, cheap sex-
ual innuendo of Pop. As Elsen says:

> With rare exceptions what has been missing from
> modern sculpture since Rodin has been the depic-
> tion of feeling and display of mutuality between
> two persons. Beginning with Matisse, self-
> expression replaced the interpretation of the
> emotional experiences of the subject in sculpture.

Segal is a kind of contemporary magus of the
prohibited by his focus on mutuality and the
tenderness of touching--the self and others.[21]

If we look at a sampling of Segal's work such as
Woman In a Restaurant Booth, 1961-62 (Fig. 2), or The
Farm Worker, 1962-63 (Fig. 3), or Woman In a Doorway II,
1965 (Fig. 4), or Woman In a Red Wicker Chair, 1964 (Fig.
5), it is obvious that the concern is with the figure in
everyday situations, without embellishments or comment on
Pop culture. There is no attempt to emphasize common mass-
produced objects; there is no reference to mass- media,
either its icons or processes; and, there is no change of
scale from the very acceptable life-sized. As Leo Castelli
said: "Segal was never really Pop; his work comes out of
Abstract Expressionism."[22] Donald Kuspit has offered this
explanation:

> For Segal emotional reality means alienation.
> He sometimes seems an American Munch: he too
> offers a "Frieze of Life"--various fragments
> or scenes of contemporary life, some panoramic
> and some close-up, all dealing with the same
> emotional fact--in Thoreau's words, the quiet
> desparation of most men's lives.[23]

So we can see that for all his staging Segal is not deal-
ing with abstract common objects or commenting on an indus-
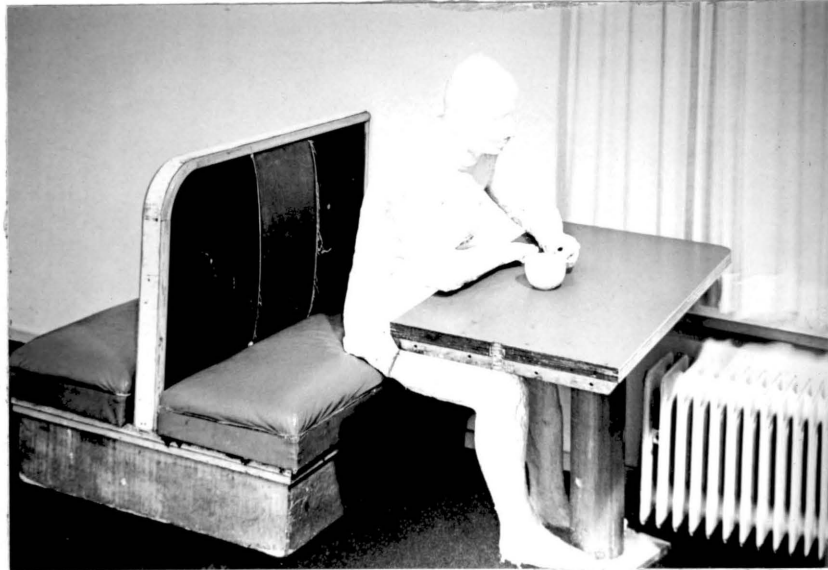trial mass-media society, he is commenting on individuals.

Fig. 2. GEORGE SEGAL Woman In A Restaurant Booth, 1962, Mixed media.

Fig. 3. GEORGE SEGAL The Farm Worker, 1963, Mixed media.

Fig. 4. GEORGE SEGAL Woman In A Doorway II, 1965, Mixed media.

Fig. 5. GEORGE SEGAL Woman In A Red Wicker Chair, 1964, Mixed media.

COMPARISONS

Andy Warhol in 1967 did a photo silk screen of
Marilyn Monroe (Fig. 6). Here he has used a commercial
technique to reproduce the same image several times. This
is a multiple image of one of pop culture's largest icons,
the movie star. The attempt here, as in other works, is
to remove the artist's influence from the work so that the
viewer is unable to determine who had a hand in the making.
As Warhol stated in an interview with G. R. Swenson:

> The reason that I'm painting this way is that I
> want to be like a machine, and I feel that
> whatever is machine-like is what I want to do.[24]

> I think it would be so great if more people
> took up silk screens so that no one would know
> whether my picture was mine or somebody else's.[25]

The image Warhol has created is one of a mass-
consumed article, the movie star, being mass-produced
with mass-production techniques.

George Segal in his piece The Movie Poster, 1967
(Fig. 7), also deals with the subject of Marilyn Monroe.
The piece does deal with the icon of the movie star; how-
ever, there is a reason for this seeming break into Pop Art.

> From time to time the Sidney Janis Gallery has
> organized exhibitions around a specific theme--
> such as eroticism, or material--such as rope.

Fig. 6. ANDY WARHOL Marilyn Monroe, 1967,
Silk screen print.

Fig. 7. GEORGE SEGAL The Movie Poster, 1967,
Mixed media.

As a "gallery artist", Segal usually created a
work especially for the occasion, although norm-
ally he "gropes" for a subject and prefers to
let it mature in his mind. The theme this time
was Homage to Marilyn Monroe, who continued
to mesmerize the Pop generation even after
her death.[26]

Even with Pop subject matter Segal is able to con-
cern himself, and the viewer, with the situation rather
than the icon. The concern of the piece is not with
Marilyn Monroe, but with a man (a worker on his lunch
hour)[27] and his relationship to the poster. Again Segal
has given the viewer a scene of life without emphasizing
the supportive material. The arrangement of the parts of
the piece and the plaster figure are sensitive and invol-
ved elements. There is no attempt to give the viewer the
feeling that the piece was made by machine.

Lucy Lippard has said that: "He is really a twentieth-
century genre artist concerned with simple everyday activ-
ities that bring out a generalized humanity."[28]

There is a question as to whether plaster can be a
sensitive material. One need only look at history to see
that many sculptors have worked in the material and have
achieved what must be, because of the acclaim they have
received, sensitive results. To cite a few examples of
works that have been done in plaster; there is Rodin's
Study for Balzac (c. 1895), Ossip Zadkine's Project for
Rimbaud Monument (1938), Henri Laurens' Man With Pipe

(1919), or many of Marino Marini's works such as <u>Arcangelo</u>
(1943), or <u>Giuditta Campigli</u> (1943). Many pieces that were
done in plaster have been translated into a more perman-
ent material (such as bronze), but this does not change
the sensitivity of the piece. The color of raw plaster
may to some be less inviting than that say of wood, but
it in no way detracts from the sensitivity of the surface
and the form. As has been said: "From artifacts in the
tombs of Egyptian kings, through Renaissance frescoes
to modern sculpture, plaster has been a basic medium of
the creative artist.[29]

Roy Lichtenstein has been concerned with basic
stylistic problems using comic strip material as subject
matter.

> In Abstract-Expressionism the paintings sym-
> bolize the idea of ground-directedness as
> opposed to object-directedness. Pop Art
> makes the statement that ground-directedness
> is not a quality that the painting has because
> of what it looks like....This tension between
> apparent object-directed products and actual
> ground-directed process is an important strength
> of Pop Art.[30]

In Lichtenstein's work, <u>Good Morning Darling</u>, 1964
(Fig. 8), the image has been reduced to a study of com-
position. There is a concern with the arrangement of
shapes and colors on the picture plane. The overall
effect is one of flatness and abstraction. The image is
of little importance and though it is one of potentially

Fig. 8. R. LICHTENSTEIN <u>Good Morning Darling</u>, 1964,
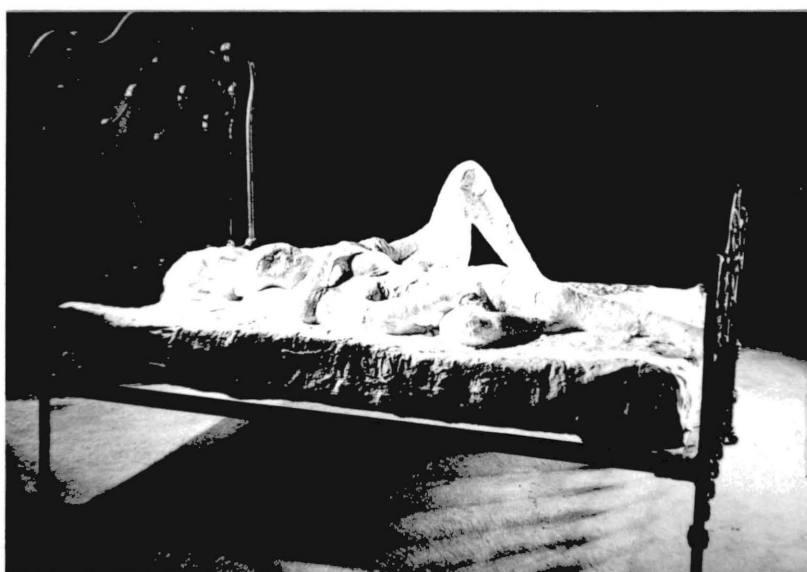Oil and magna on canvas.

Fig. 9. GEORGE SEGAL <u>Lovers On A Bed II</u>, 1970,
Mixed media.

Fig. 10. GEORGE SEGAL Lovers On A Bed II, 1970,
Mixed media, (detail).

strong emotion, the viewer is unaffected by it. Alloway says:

> Lichtenstein believes in composition as the
> balance of contrasting but compatible forms,
> in which size, direction, and color can be
> related; in which warm colors compensate for
> cool, in which curves ameliorate right angles
> and in which details enliven large spaces.[31]

George Segal's piece, Lovers On a Bed II 1970 (Figs.
9 and 10), is also a study of composition. The viewer is
treated to a sensitive study of a situation with universal
appeal. As Segal says: "Every time I feel the impulse to
treat this theme it is because I am struck by the enormous
variety of relationships possible between a man and a
woman."[32] This work goes beyond composition as an abstract
problem to a concern with the human condition. Not only
composition but surface treatment, detail, and the rela-
tionship itself are vital parts of the piece. Again we
are faced with the fact that Segal has used a common
object, the bed, in his work; to use this as a reason to
call Segal a Pop Artist is to miss the point of his work.

Tom Wesselman's piece, Bath Tub Collage No. 3 1963
(Fig. 11), is a piece using both painted images and real
objects in the composition. He has juxtaposed a realistic
setting of the bath tub and surroundings with a flatly
painted nude with flat yellow hair. The image is one
of outline or paper cut-out. The female image has been
reduced to an object just as every other part of the
piece is an object. This piece is one of composition,
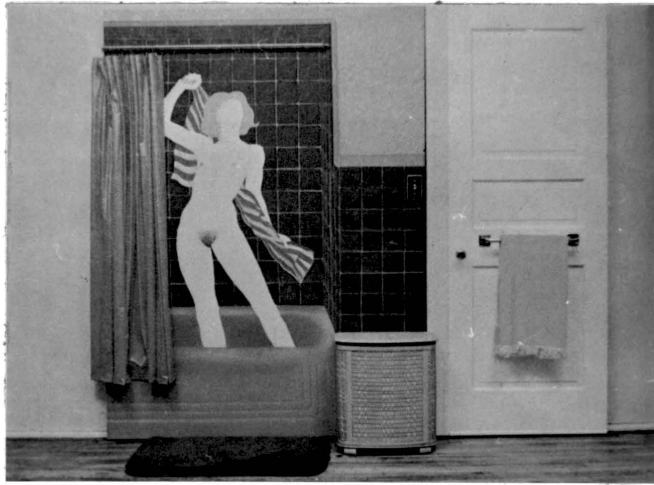
Fig. 11. T. WESSELMAN Bathtub Collage No. 3, 1963,
         Mixed media.

Fig. 12. GEORGE SEGAL Woman Shaving Her Leg, 1963,
         Mixed media.

a statement about the icons of our life style, with no emotional response to the human element. In fact the overall effect is one of denial of any human quality in an exploration of all that is industrial in the American bathroom.

In Segal's Woman Shaving Her Leg 1963 (Fig. 12), we have what seems to be an actual piece of Pop Art.

> The bathroom has been a concern of Pop artist Claes Oldenburg and Tom Wesselman in particular, as well as of Jim Dine, Roy Lichtenstein, and Robert Whitman. Segal sees nothing unusual in this, and to him it simply reflects his generation's fascination with all aspects of the new American landscape, as well as a semi-erotic preoccupation with the American cult of cleanliness.[33]

In comparing this piece to Wesselman's the obvious difference is that while Wesselman's figure is flat and object-like with no emotional qualities, Segal's figure is someone. There is a relationship which the viewer can understand and relate to; he can compare the irony of the process and situation that Segal has presented to his own experiences. The piece, as with others, is not just a compositional study or an emphasis of the common object, but a slice of life.

1, 2, 3 and Out, 1963 (Fig. 13), by James Rosenquist is an example of his fragmented images painted in billboard style. His images are of objects seen on American billboards--mass-media advertising. His style is an

obvious transference of commercial technique to the easel

and with it he brings the images and colors of the largest,

in terms of scale, popular culture hard-sell image. His

fragmented billboard images are arranged on the canvas

not only as compositional devices but also as triggers

to which the viewer will react.

> In 1960 and 1961 I painted the front of a 1950
> Ford. I felt it was an anonymous image. I
> wasn't angry about that, and it wasn't a nos-
> talgic image either. Just an image. I use
> images from old magazines--when I say old, I
> mean 1945 to 1955--a time we haven't started
> to ferret out as history yet. If it was the
> front end of a new car there would be people
> who would be passionate about it, and the front
> end of an old car might make some people nos-
> talgic. The images are like no-images. There
> is a freedom there. If it were abstract, people
> might make it into something. If you paint
> Franco-American spaghetti, they won't make a
> crucifixion out of it, and also who could be
> nostalgic about canned spaghetti? They'll
> bring their reactions but, probably they won't
> have as many irrelevant ones...34

The Dry Cleaning Store 1964 (Fig. 14), is Segal's

most garish and perhaps most Pop piece. Here, he has used

light in the form of neon, he has painted the figure, and

the image is one of a quick-service establishment. The

result of the painted figure, the blue foil backdrop, and

the neon lighting is a denial of the human element. Here

the figure is a symbol rather than an actual personage.

> Segal has volunteered his own symbolic inter-
> pretation. He sees the woman as the guardian
> of the bride's chastity--a chaperone or duenna.
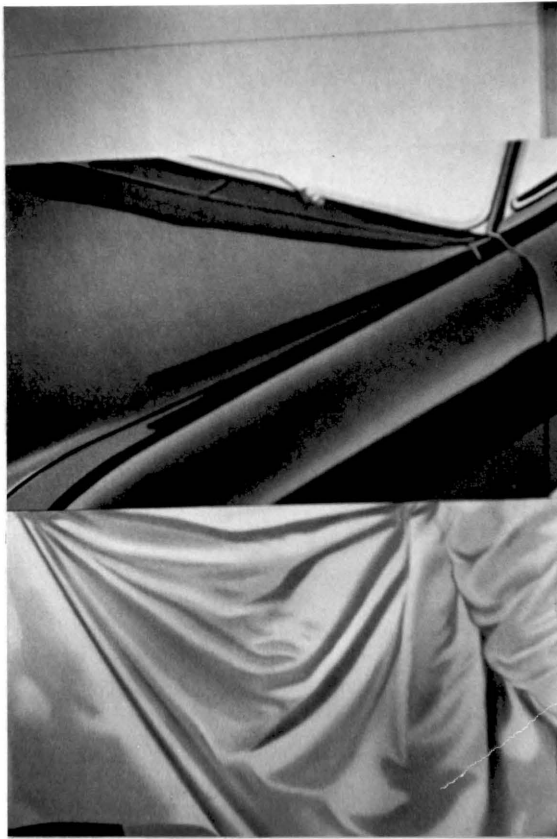> The bride is, of course, alluded to in the wed-

Fig. 13. J. ROSENQUIST 1, 2, 3 and Out, 1963,
Oil on canvas.

Fig. 14. GEORGE SEGAL The Dry Cleaning Store, 1964,
Mixed media.

ding dress, pristinely guarded in its gaudy
showcase. Worn for one day and laundered the
next to be closeted forever, it implies
purity, and the tricks life plays on the pure
at heart; it is also a sad metaphor for women's
loss of dreams and expectations. We are dealing
with another level of ordinary human activity,
but one cloaked in an aura of mystery.[35]

In spite of the Pop appearance of this piece we can
see from Segal's interpretation that it has a basis in a
concern for the human condition rather than an exploration
of icons or common objects.

Finally, we consider the only sculptor that Lucy
Lippard feels is a Pop Artist, Claes Oldenburg. His piece,
Model For a Bathroom 1966 (Fig. 15), shows his examination
of the everyday objects of our culture through foreign
materials. Oldenburg has examined our culture and tried
to make us aware of ourselves by forcing us to see the
icons we have created. Also he is trying to expand the
boundries of art. Perhaps his attitudes are best shown
in the opening lines of his statement, "I Am For Art...":

I am for art that is political-erotical-
mystical, that does something other than sit
on its ass in a museum.
I am for art that grows up not knowing it is
art at all, art given the chance of having a
starting point of zero.[36]

In comparing Segal to Oldenburg there is the prob-
lem, encountered in the others to a lesser degree, of the
lack of the human figure in Oldenburg's work. Using Segal's
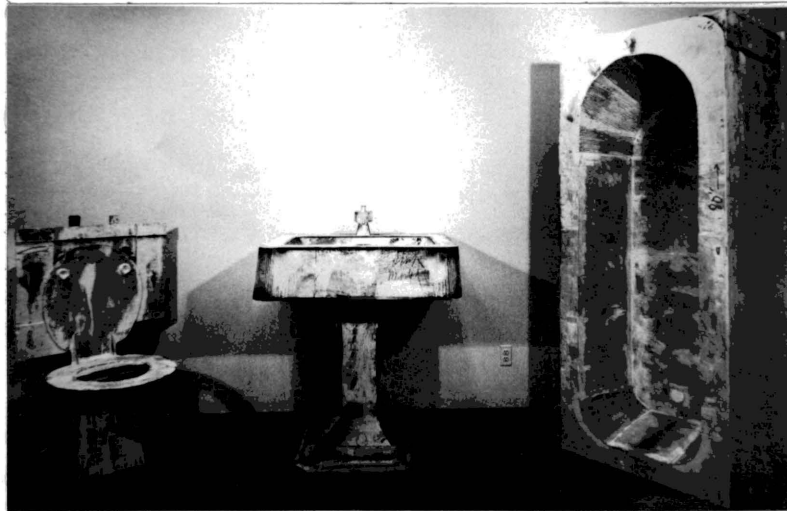Woman Washing Her Foot 1964-65 (Fig. 16), for comparison

Fig. 15. CLAES OLDENBURG Model For Bathroom, 1966,
Corrugated paper and enamel.

Fig. 16. GEORGE SEGAL Woman Washing Her Foot, 1964-65,
Mixed media.

there really is no comparison. Here the image is one of
genre, a stop action of human activity. The emphasis is
on the figure, with the basin and other articles, only props,
to complete the situation. The reference to modern cul-
ture or its icons is totally lacking. The appeal here is
universal and not dependent on an awareness of present
day culture.

Zeifer has this to say:

> Segal admires Marcel Duchamp and his concept
> of the found object but cannot use Duchamp's
> philosophy in his own work. Duchamp's ready-
> mades questioned the traditional values of art
> history: could everyday objects such as a bicycle
> wheel mounted on a chair be called art? Segal
> does not concern himself with that question.
> For Segal, any man-made object is expressive
> whether the artist makes it or finds it. He
> recreates a place and a situation, and the
> objects he chooses carve the space.[37]

CONCLUSION

Pop was the expansion, exploitation, exploration, and presentation of popular culture. This was manifested in changes in scale and materials, a use of, or reportage on, new technology and mass-media advertising in all forms. The subject matter was the mass-produced object (even the human figure was reduced to a media image or common mass-produced object). George Segal's inclusion by some writers and art historians in this movement, as we have seen, may be in error. His is not the world of alien materials and exaggerated scale; he is not concerned with mass-media; and, the common object is not something to be emphasised as a report on the popular culture of America. Segal's work is in the historically traditional vein of the human figure sculpted in-the-round presented in different situations. There is precedence for Segal's use of the figure in common situations in the Ash Can School and in the American regionalism of the thirties. Rublowsky says:

> On the periphery there were such artists as
> James Dine, George Segal, Marisol Escobar,
> Robert Indiana, and others who also approached
> pop art. They are, however, not pop artists in
> the strict sense of the term. Their artistic
> statement, though it borrows from the reality
> revealed by pop art, is more closely allied to
> the abstract-expressionist ethos in that their

statements depend on sensibility and texture
for the projection of an artistic aura.[38]

The artist is concerned with the essence of these figures.
They are not abstract objects used only for compositional
concerns; they are true portraits.

We must avoid expediency in our attempts to classify
an artist's place in history. His work and his philosophy
go hand-in-hand and must be considered together. If an
artist is an individual, then we must not put him in a
group; let him stand on his own. Let us take a more
purist point of view.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Definitions of Pop Art are given on page 5 of this paper.

[2]L. Alloway, _American Pop Art_, New York: Collier Books, 1974, p. 3.

[3]M. Compton, _Pop Art_, New York: Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd., 1970, p. 19.

[4]L. Lippard, _Pop Art_, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1966, p. 70.

[5]Alloway, _American Pop Art_, p. 9.

[6]_6,000 Words_, A supplement to _Webster's Third New International Dictionary_, 1976 ed., s. v. "Pop Art".

[7]Alloway, _American Pop Art_, p. 18.

[8]Ibid., p. 19.

[9]Compton, _Pop Art_, p. 36.

[10]Lippard, _Pop Art_, p. 82.

[11]Sterling McIlhany, "Pop Goes The Easel," _American Artist_, February 1970, p. 51.

[12]Lippard, _Pop Art_, p. 69.

[13]Ibid., p. 125.

[14]Ibid., p. 69.

[15]Ellen Zeifer, "George Segal: Sculptural Environments," _American Artist_, January 1975, p. 76.

[16]H. Geldzahler, "An Interview With George Segal," _Artforum_, November 1964, p. 26.

[17]P. Tuchman, "Interview With George Segal," _Artforum_, May/June 1972, p. 77.

[18]W. Seitz, _Segal_, New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1972, p. 5.

[19]R. Pincus-Witten, "George Segal As A Realist," _Artforum_, Summer 1967, p. 85.

[20]Carl Goldstein,"The Direct Cast Sculpture," _Arts_, January 1976, p. 88.

[21]Albert Elsen, "Mind Bending With George Segal," _Artnews_, February 1977, p. 34.

[22]Suzi Gablik, "Protagonists of Pop," _Studio International_, July/August 1969, p. 10.

[23]Donald Kuspit, "George Segal: On The Verge of Tragic Vision," _Art In America_, March 1977, p. 84.

[24]G. R. Swenson, "What Is Pop Art," _Artnews_, November 1963, p. 26.

[25]Ibid.

[26]J. Van Der Marck, _George Segal_, New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1975, p. 136.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Lippard, _Pop Art_, p. 102.

[29]Dona Z. Meilach, _Creating With Plaster_, Chicago: Reilly and Lee Company, 1966, Forward.

[30]Swenson, _What Is Pop Art_, p. 25.

[31]Alloway, _American Pop Art_, p. 80.

[32]Van Der Marck, George Segal, p. 185.

[33]Ibid., p. 86.

[34]Swenson, What is Pop Art, p. 41.

[35]Van Der Marck, George Segal, p. 55.

[36]J. Russell and S. Gablik, Pop Art Redefined, New York: Preager Publishers, 1969, p. 97.

[37]Pincus-Witten, George Segal as a Realist, p. 85.

[38]John Rublowsky, Pop Art, New York: Basic Books Inc., 1965, p. 30.

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