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Document 24

Andy Warhol Art Authentication Board  
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New York, New York  
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To Whom It May Concern

I have met with Joe Simon and heard the details of Andy Warhol lending the acetate transparencies to Richard Ekstract. I have been shown the letter sent to Richard Ekstract from the estate, the pictures from the magazine Tape Recorder, the letter to Joe Simon from Paul Morrissey and other material pertaining to the 1965 red Andy Warhol self portrait.

From what I understand in the summer of 1965 Warhol lent Richard Ekstract the acetate transparencies that Ekstract and his printers Norman Locker and Herman Meyers used to make the screens before printing the paintings under the telephone supervision of Andy Warhol. I understand that these portraits didn't have any hand painting and were mechanical prints using screens. The colors of these were chosen by Andy Warhol. This process was very similar to the way that Warhol's printer Rupert Smith and I printed the last series of self portraits that Andy Warhol ever made.

There were some self-portraits, which we screened on a camouflage background, but they were on a pre-printed canvas background of which was printed by us in the Tribeca studio, not painted by Warhol. Most were printed on solid color backgrounds, which were painted by his assistants with no artistic brushwork before they came to Rupert's, others on a pre-primed canvas from New York Central Art Supply. There really is no difference whatsoever in the way that the paintings made by Richard Ekstract from Andy Warhol's transparencies in 1965 or the last series of self-portraits that Rupert Smith and I had made. Andy Warhol worked this way, with either Rupert Smith, myself, Richard Ekstract or many other people that I know of such as Alex Heinrici. I don't see any difference at all. Warhol gave direction but always left an opening for input from others. He was very open to experimentation.

I had never seen Andy Warhol even once come down to the studio in Tribeca to watch his work being printed. Sometimes he would ring up and give his instructions over the telephone.

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Rupert would collect the canvases from the Factory. Before I arrived the screens would be made elsewhere but we started to make the screens in our studio from the film positives. We would have the film developed before Rupert Smith would show the positives to Andy Warhol in his factory. This part of the process was extremely important to Andy Warhol and which he always took part in. The film positive was integral to the way the image was going to look. Warhol would sometimes say that the image was too light or too dark, or that it may need to be re-shot. He would look for wrinkles or bags under the eyes and want them taken out. He would ask for something else to be corrected or make other suggestions. He would suggest which colors to use and the way he wanted it printed. He always had some sort of direction. It would be the last time that Andy Warhol would see the image until the painting was finished. We would then mix the colors ourselves before we would start the printing. After we printed the paintings the work would dry before being sent over to the factory.

The paintings were done to suit his intentions. He would never participate in the actual printing. The female portraits would arrive at our studio with usually the eyebrows pre-painted, the lips or other parts before we would paint and screen over them. Often the male portraits were just printed black over a solid white background such as in the case of Keith Haring's portrait or in the case of the Pat Hern's portrait it was printed black on solid silver. At no time did Andy ever supervise the printing of the work while I was working for Rupert.

I have read the quotes made by Rupert Smith in Bob Colacello's book and agree with them.

I believe the process used by Richard Ekstract is as authentic as any Warhol that I have worked on during the years that I worked for Andy Warhol.

  
Jean-Paul Russell

10/25/02  
Date