



1964

Screenprint and ink on wood

Each: 17 x 17 x 14 inches
(43.2 x 43.2 x 35.6 cm)

ANDY WARHOL

American, 1928–1987

LET'S LOOK

What do you notice about this sculpture?

What colors, patterns, and designs do you see?

What do the words tell you about these objects?

LET'S LOOK AGAIN

How is this sculpture similar to and different from actual Brillo boxes?

What do you think the artist's message(s) might be?

THREE BRILLO BOXES

At first glance, these three boxes of Brillo soap pads look like items found in a grocery store. In fact, they are painted wooden sculptures by the artist Andy Warhol. Why might an artist make a work of art like this?

Warhol, who was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, first worked as an illustrator, commercial artist, and store window designer in New York City. In the 1960s he began creating works of art that took inspiration from everyday objects, such as Campbell's tomato soup cans, and boxes of Brillo soap pads and Heinz ketchup. This style of art became known as **Pop Art** because of its connection to popular culture. During this time, Americans were increasingly bombarded with advertisements for commercial products, a trend that continues today.

Much of Warhol's art seems to play with this **culture of consumerism**. For example, the bold blue and red words on the Brillo boxes call out to us, proclaiming the product's benefits. Because the boxes are identical, the designs create repeating, mesmerizing patterns, such as the two *l*'s in Brillo, the word "New!," and the curvy lines that surround the logos. The lively design suggests that the soap pads may even be fun to use.

Warhol's sculpture raises questions. What happens when we see the same image over and over again? What effect do advertisements have on us? Do they make us want to buy products? Or do we stop paying attention? Can objects from everyday life also be art? Where do you find art in the world around you?

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