

POP ART

# Introduction

- Contrary to popular belief the Pop art movement started in Britain and not the USA
- It originated in England in the 1950s as a reaction to the Neo-Romanticism of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War years and the landscape abstraction of the St. Ives artists
- American Pop was an urban reaction to the self-referential art of the Abstract Expressionists and had its roots in Dada

# English Pop

- Pop started with a group of artists, architects and critics known as the Independent Group who met for lectures at the ICA (Institute of Contemporary Art)
- The leader of the group was Richard Hamilton (b.1922) and he formulated a list of what every Pop work should be (see next page with Hamilton's Just What Is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing? (1956) - the 1<sup>st</sup> Pop work ever)

# What should a Pop work be?

- Popular
- Transient
- Expendable
- Low Cost
- Mass Produced
- Young
- Witty
- Sexy
- Gimmicky
- Glamorous
- Big Business



# Hamilton – Woman/Commodity

- Hamilton described Pop as 'positive Dada' as he considered both to be anti-tradition
- In \$he (1958-61) Hamilton uses Newspaper collage and images from magazines and newspapers with a painterly style



# Hamilton – The Car

- In Hommage a Chrysler Corp (1957) Hamilton uses ads combining woman and machine
- Parts of the car project into our space
- The woman is composed of lips and a bra ad!
- He looks at the the fast car image of post war US but is it a homage or a parody?



# American Pop

- American Pop celebrates the world of plenty that was post war USA
- Images include movie stars and consumerism in the form of food and ads
- It depicts the rise of the cult of celebrity and the advent of capitalist consumerism



# Andy Warhol 1928-87

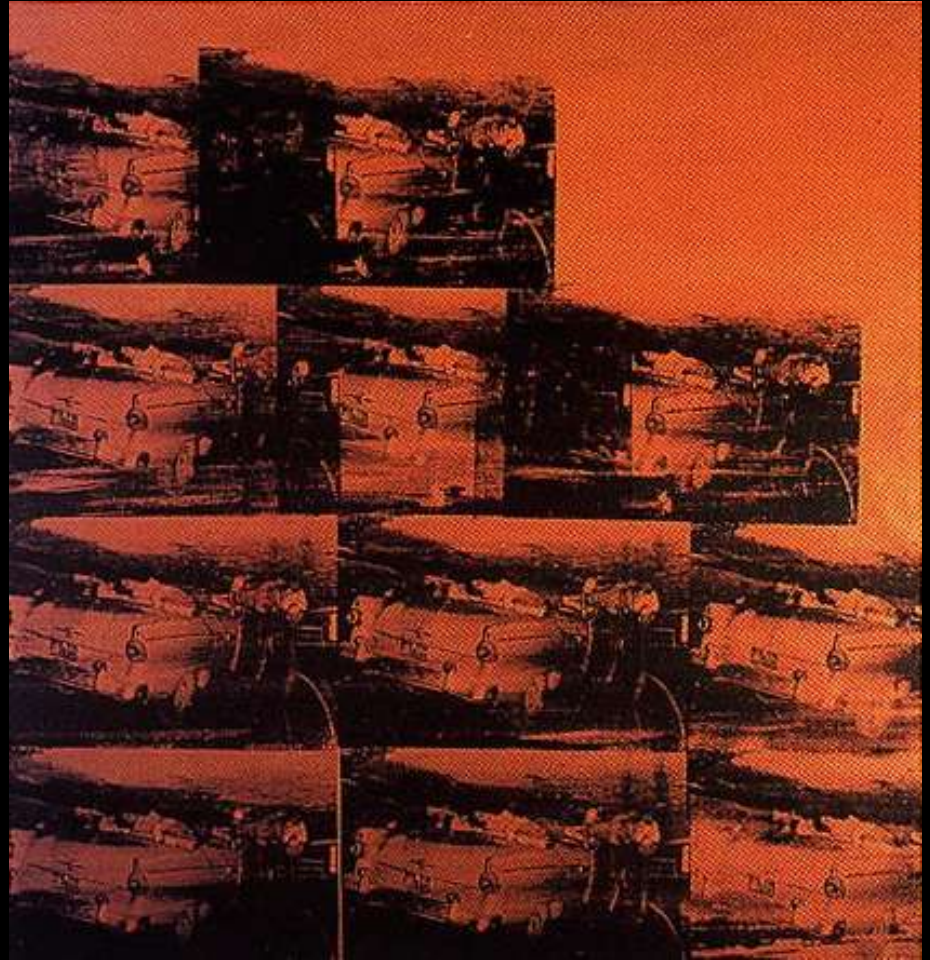
- Arguably the best known Warhol has been termed Pope of Pop
- His screen prints, mass produced in his studio 'The Factory', are the most recognisable Pop works
- Can you read the disintegration of the star in his Marilyn Diptych





# Warhol - Disaster

- Lesser known are his Brillo boxes and the Disaster Series of screenprints
- These screenprints are concerned with death and disaster
- They depict those who become famous for 15 minutes – unfortunately they had to die first
- This is '5 Deaths 11 times in Orange' (1964)



# James Rosenquist b 1933

- Another of the New York Pop artists whose training was actually in billboard painting
- Rosenquist is technically brilliant – his realism on a large scale
- His works, like this one '1,2,3, Outside' (1963), are huge and all about sex but in a very subtle way



# Tom Wesselmann b.1931

- Wesselmann is the still life artist of the Pop movement – but on closer inspection you'll see his works are all about sex too!

- Still life #24, (1962) is a typical example – complete with phallic and female imagery





# Roy Lichtenstein (1923-97)

- Another billboard artist whose huge scale works are impressive and memorable
- Famous for developing a style of painting that imitated the printing of comic strip images
- Whaam! (1963) is a witty comment on war



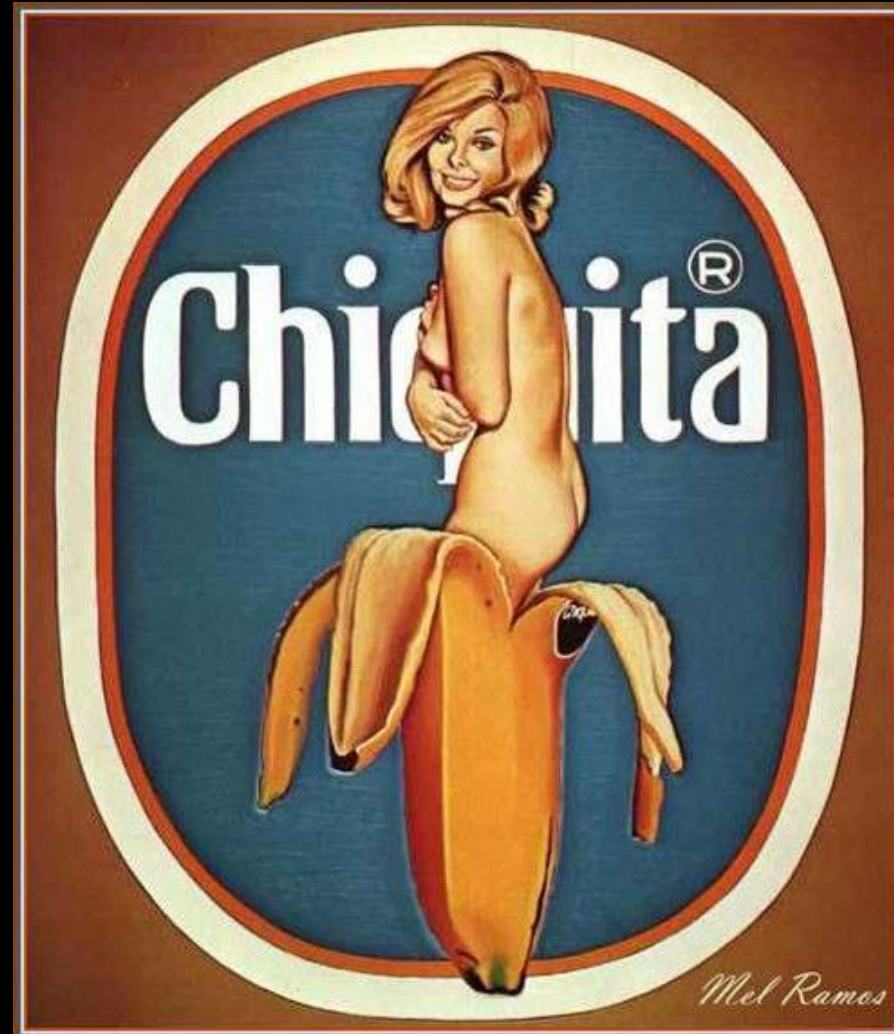
# Claes Oldenburg b1929

- Oldenburg is the 'sculptor' of the New York group
- His works elevate the commodity to the status that it achieved in post war American consumerist culture – absolutely massive – such as 'Floorburger' below



# West Coast Pop

- Whilst the New York artists celebrated the commodity and the cult of the movie star, artists in California were enjoying the sun
- They focused on fast food and the hectic surfing life – sexy and glamorous
- Mel Ramos is a typical example – woman plus commodity equals sex



# Conclusion

- Pop bridged the gap between fine art (art in the gallery) and the mass media (magazines, newspapers, adverts which are the visual stimuli the public receives everyday)
- Pop manifested itself slightly differently in Britain and East and West US - being bigger, brasher and bolder in the US and more subtle and witty in England
- Was Pop a homage to or a parody of consumerism? That is THE question