

NC 0033291 7



LES LEVINE AND OLIVERO TOSCANI

SHOCK

IN ART AND ADVERTISEMENTS.

MARIA-ELENA DOYLE

FACULTY OF DESIGN VISUAL COMMUNICATION

National College of Art and Design

Faculty: Visual Communications

Les Levine and Oliviero Toscani,
Shock in Art and Ads

by Maria-Elena Doyle

Submitted to the Faculty of History of Art and Design and Complementary
studies in Candidacy of the Degree of and name of degree of
Bachelor in Design 1995

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my tutor Francis Ruane, the staff at IMMA, N.C.A.D library, and Profile Plus, Benetton PR for all their help. Also many thanks to Declan McGonagle and Les Levine for their interviews and insight.

Contents

List of plates

Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Using advertising to communicate.	4
Have artists lost touch with the language of the street?	
Using Billboards as art	6
Advertising as art?	8
Toscani exhibits his ads as art	
Chapter 2: Les Levine media artist	11
Levine art as advertising	14
Levine's use of advertising media for his art	
Toscani' shock and provocation	27
Toscani uses the same techniques as Levine	
Provocation tactics	29
Shock tactics	33
Chapter 3: Why Benetton use photojournalistic images ?	38
Who's shocked and why ?	39
Inconsistencies in the way shocking imagery is used in the media.	42
Shock used by artists.	44
Conclusion	49

List of Plates

Warhol's, 1962 Campbell soup cans,	(fig:1).
Les Levine, 1989 'Green House'	(fig:2)
Les Levine 'Brand new'	(fig:3).
Les Levine, 1982 "we are not afraid"	(fig:4)
Les Levine 1989 "Green House", water colour,	(fig:5)
Les Levine 1989 "Consume or perish"	(fig:6)
Les Levine "pray for more"	(fig:7)
Les Levine 1989 "switch position", (watercolour)	(fig:8)
Les Levine "Get More" (watercolour)	(fig:9)
Les Levine "Brand New" (watercolour)	(fig:10)
Les Levine "Draw Charm" (watercolour)	(fig:11)
Les Levine 'Switch Position and Brand New subverting other advertisements'	(fig:12)
Les Levine 1987 "Forgive Yourself" campaign in Kassel for Documenta 8	(fig:13)
Les Levine Torture Yourself	(fig:14)
Les Levine Control Everyone	(fig:15)
Les Levine Forget Yourself	(fig:16)
Les Levine Play everyone	(fig:17).
Les Levine Master yourself	(fig:18)
Les Levine Create Yourself	(fig:19)
Les Levine Lead Yourself	(fig:20)
Les Levine Hate Yourself	(fig:21)
Les Levine Forgive Yourself on site in Kassel	(fig:22)
Les Levine "Blame God"	(fig:23)
Les Levine "Kill God"	(fig:24)
Les Levine Starve God	(fig:25)
Les Levine "play God"	(fig:26)

Les Levine "Attack God"	(fig: 27)
Oliviero Toscani Global Unity,	(fig:28 & fig:29)
Oliviero Toscani Unitted colours of contrast	(fig :30)
Oliviero Toscani Global Unity.	(fig:31& 32)
Oliviero Toscani Blackwoman breast-feeding a white baby,	(fig:33)
Oliviero Toscani Handcuffed	(fig:34)
Oliviero Toscani 1991 angel/devil	(fig:35)
Mark Heckman, "Afro Country Club"	(fig:36)
Oliviero Toscani The burning car image	(fig:37)
Oliviero Toscani 1992, H.I.V Branded, arm	(fig:38),
Oliviero Toscani H.I.V Branded bottom	(fig:39)
Oliviero Toscani Murder in Palermo	(fig:40)
Les Levine Attack God and Rambo poster	(fig:41&42)
Oliviero Toscani, Aids pieta	(fig:43)
The NY Daily News 1928 Electrocution,	(fig:44)
Man being decapitated	(fig:45)
Warhol's, Electric chair,	(fig:46)
Benetton, Shock of reality, Electric chair	(fig:47)
Warhols Ambulance disaster	(fig:48)
Warhols Death&Disaster images of the burning car	(fig:49)
Oliviero Toscani, New born bloody baby	(fig:50)
Håågen Dazs,	(fig:51)
Helmut Newton, Goodmans stereo equipment,	(fig:52)
Andres Serrano, "piss Christ"	(fig:53)
Andres Serrano, Heaven and Hell,	(fig:54)
Robert Mapplethorpe, Self-portrait	(fig:55)
Joel Peter Witkin, Feast of Fools	(fig:56)
Joel Peter Witkin,	(fig:57)

Introduction

This Thesis is about shock advertising applied on one hand to commercial purposes, and the other to artistic ends.

When I first thought about it I believed that "Shock Advertising" would be a good subject upon which to write a thesis on an aspect of advertising.

My initial researches indicated there was nothing coherent on the topic, and it was not until I came across remarks made by Oliviero Toscani of Benetton and the public's reaction to Les Levine's artwork using advertising billboards that my ideas came together.

In both cases the same shock advertising medium is used. Billboards for maximum public exposure. In the case of Benetton the shock impact is connected with advertising a mundane product in an unusual way. Levine's purpose was to use the same billboards in an arresting or shocking way for solely artistic purposes, calculated to affront.

In both instances the aim was or is to cause the looker to stop and think about the images, and this Thesis seeks to explore the impact or reaction to shock advertising and facets related there to.

In Chapter 1, I'm going to start off by talking about how art has lost touch with the language of the street and how artists like Les Levine are making an effort to reach their public by using advertising techniques to communicate. I will also discuss how Benetton are trying to validate their images as art by exhibiting them in galleries.

In Chapter 2, I will be discussing what a media Artist is and how Levine goes about using media for his art. I will also discuss the advertising techniques of shock and provocation as

used by both Levine and Toscani for their campaigns.

In chapter three I talk about Benetton's use of photo-journalistic images and the impact of such imagery on society. Further to that there are also the inconsistencies in the media's use of imagery which will be demonstrated. Finally I will discuss shock used both by artists and advertisers as a sales strategy to promote work.

Clearly the Benetton "ads" brought the idea of shock advertising to full prominence, but there is another aspect to it which raises interesting ideas. Toscani claims that his work ought to be considered in relation to advertising today in the same light as the work of the old masters in relation to church art. Of course the concept of advertising and publicity as we know it today did not exist when the church patronised artists to illustrate and reinforce religious beliefs. However the artwork did have an ulterior motive beyond art for its own sake, and in that context there is a parallel between church art and advertising, outrageous as it may seem.

Toscani uses the medium of shock advertising and claims it is art. By extension, if it is accepted as art, it is entitled to be considered as art created for other motives, that is to say for instance, religious purposes, or anything else that may come to mind ;ie propaganda. To quote Toscani:

Advertising is everywhere, but the longest lasting campaign in the history of advertising has been made by the church" He goes on to say, "sometimes those artists had the courage to show even violence and blood and expression that today would be censored. That is the reason the church is doing very well after two thousand years, and the churches of today are those multi-national companies (Ref: Without Walls, Channel 4 feb. '94).

Toscani seems to be echoing the approach of Les Levine who had originally got the idea that billboards could be appropriated to convey an artistic message in a powerful advertising medium. Les Levine's work did shock, and preceded-

ed Benetton's shock advertising by some years.

Les Levine was one of the first to introduce art to billboards, or to appropriate advertising mechanisms for conveying ideas connected with art. He perceived there was a lack of communication between artists and the public.

My thesis is largely based on material derived from general reading connected with billboard advertising, from newspaper articles, art magazines, reviews, journals, video interviews with Toscani, replies to faxed questions to Les Levine, and an interview with Declan McGonagel, Director of the Irish Museum of Modern Art, (who organised exhibitions of Les Levine's work in England '85 and Ireland '94.)

Furthermore I have a Tape of a lecture given in the Irish Museum of Modern Art by Les Levine. Unfortunately I was not able to interview Toscani, or Les Levine personally.

CHAPTER 1

USING ADVERTISING TO COMMUNICATE

Is art out of touch with modern day visual language of the street?

In 1981 the BBC commissioned a billboard project to produce images for display on two hundred hoarding sites throughout Britain. In a review David Lee makes an advertiser's critique of the artist's billboards, placing their value in the context of a real advertising world and gets a general opinion on them. He then judges a Classic Castella ad as if it were a piece of conceptual art it?, gets the thumbs up.

Lee's conclusion is that :

Artists do not have the visual skills to compete in the outside world of rapid messages where technical virtuosity is required.
(Lee, 1992 , pg 224-5)

This is just one example of how Art has become separated from society. The reason why this separation occurred is because our cultural structures (ie: museums and galleries), which are meant to be mechanisms for distribution rather than holding the meaning that is contained in artworks, has tended to , in valuing the object, over the process to assist in separating the artist from society.

Throughout the nineteenth century and up until now museums portrayed the artist as a disconnected, poetic, tragic figure who is unable to communicate to ordinary people. Some artists are saying, according Declan Mc Gonagle(director of the IMMA)

well wait a minute this is completely untenable. I want to speak to those people about something. I am not saying that I am in a privileged position, I am not some sort of poetic visionary, leading these people, I just want to be in conversation with these people.(Doyle, Interview, Mc Gonagle, IMMA,1994)

So many artists have tried to look at languages that people already read like advertising, because we live in a visual world. There are a number of interesting points about that. Advertisers generally do not change the core of their advertising between locations. So you will get an advertisement in Derry on a billboard for instance, or put in T.V, or in the newspapers, and it will be the same as an advertisement in Dublin. There will be local advertisements around it, but the core of the advertisement will be consistent. Yet our cultural structures deny that capability to the regional audience with regard to art. You know the idea that people in Derry or Sligo can't deal with the contemporary visual arts in the capital city. Now this raises all sorts of interesting questions about the role of the artist, and the relationship of the artist to the community, but there is a doubt about the "Dominant Structure", in which the artist is separated from the community. There is a space, however. (Mc Gonagle, IMMA 1994)

The argument could go on for pages, so I am paraphrasing Mc Gonagle to make it shorter. The community already deals with visual imagery of a kind, T.V, Media, Advertising and so forth, and it can understand these. We know the community can understand these ads because they go out and buy the stuff. Why is there this gap therefore where art is concerned?, This is exactly what the whole debate, or discourse, is about which artists like Les Levine are involved in.

(Mc Gonagle, IMMA 1994)

Like the BBC project in England, in the early seventies the Arts Council in Northern Ireland did a project where they commissioned artists to make versions of their paintings and their prints for billboards.

It failed, because it pretended a billboard was a gallery and people looked at the works and thought

it's not saying anything. The images disappeared alongside ads, it couldn't compete with the sophistication of the language already developed in the ads and I would say to some extent that David Lee was right in his opinion of the results of the BBC billboard project. If a video artist is working today, it's MTV they've got to compete with, if they want to address a mass audience. If they want to address a private that's a different thing. The point is that if an artist says "There is the public, there are several public's, there are a whole range of people I should be talking with. Then the artist is duty bound to find the mechanism that works and advertising works people understand it because we know it manipulates people into buying things. Therefore it's no surprise that artists are trying to deal with that language. (Doyle, Interview, McGonagle, IMMA, Dec. '94)

BILLBOARDS: ART OR ADVERTISING?

Les Levine is one of those few artists who is making an effort to reach his public audience, through billboards. Billboards are part of our cultural landscape. They reflect social values and social change.

Billboards communicate to the public in the absence of any initiation on their part. This means that ideas and images can be presented to an unsuspecting audience.

An American advertising firm made a study of how much billboards communicate awareness. In their study they asked five hundred adults randomly if they knew the name of the 30th president of the United States. Only four percent knew the answer. Following this, one hundred and seventy billboards were put up, they read "Calvin Coolidge was our 30th president". A month later another random five hundred were interviewed, this time 39.8 percent knew the answer.

(Landu, 1981, pg99&100)

Billboard art was influenced tremendously by optical art in the sixties using colours to grab the viewers attention. Colours could be used to make an ad appear sombre, funny, reassuring and even violent or shocking. Levine adopted the advertisers

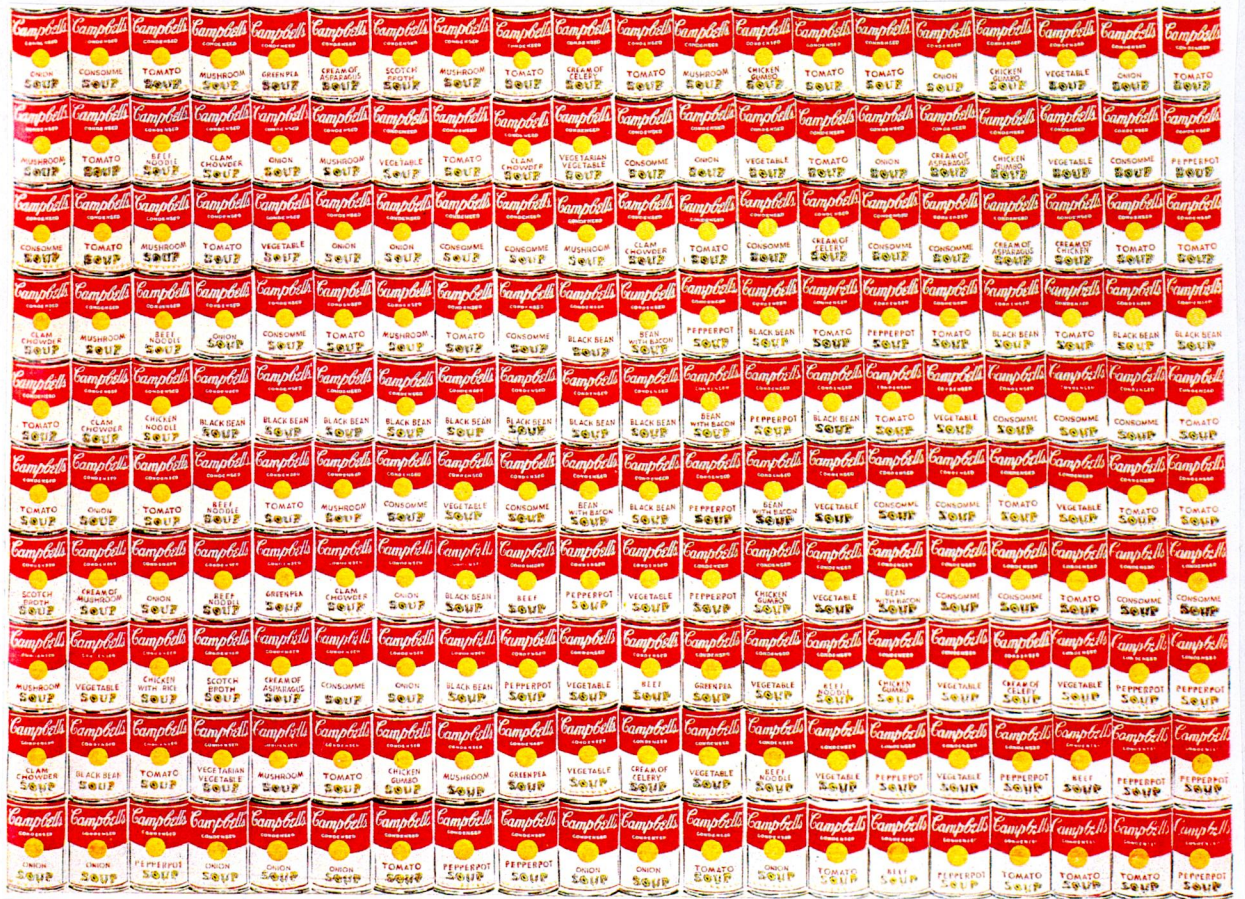


Fig:1

Warhol's,1962 Campbell soup cans, (fig:1).



use of colour in his own billboard images in order to create the same sort of anxieties as real advertisements create in viewers.

Pop Art was the most important art movement to emerge from the sixties. What was most avant garde about this movement was the way artists used realism to parody realism. Pop Art drew no line between advertising media and fine art, and portrayed society in the sixties and the environment uncensored. Pop artists began to do what billboard artists had been doing for decades, blowing up the everyday and familiar larger than life, ie: Warhol's Campbell soup cans, (fig:1).

The line between art and advertising suddenly started to become blurred and merged. As a result context has become a much depended-upon concept in visual aesthetics since the mid-sixties. This "context" concept means that however wacky or far-out an artist's work is, the argument is

"if it's seen in a Museum, gallery or art magazine then it is art, no matter how bad or anti-art or non-art it appear". (Lippard, 1984, pg79.).

For the artists in the art world this is the perfect solution to the question "What is Art?". To the average person on the street however this doesn't make sense. Ironically, however:

the context concept, in fact, serves to further confine art within the art world by fixing it's validity there. If it communicates, and satisfies the aesthetic needs of it's audience, who cares what it's called?. (Lippard, 1984, pg79).

ADVERTISING AS ART

Like in the sixties, the merging of art and advertising seems to be occurring. Oliviero Toscani, creative director and photographer for Benetton exhibited in 1993 at the Venice Biennale. It was the first time his work had been commissioned specifically for an art show and the fact Toscani insisted the image appear as an advertisement for Benetton underlines the fact that he considers his art no different from the work he does for the company. Toscani's exhibition consisted of 56 glossy colour photographs of male and female genitals.

Toscani's other work for Benetton has created shock and controversy and has been banned in many countries throughout the world. Toscani does not consider himself to be a salesman. He views himself as a communicator, an artist, a photographer. In a recent interview on the Late Late Show in Dublin, Toscani was asked why he doesn't just work independently as a photographer he feels so strongly about these issues. Toscani argues that he cannot support himself as a photographer:

During the renaissance the church used to hire the the painters to paint madonnas, Gods, angles, devils, and they probably didn't believe in that religion but there art did transcend the selling of religion. I do need the media. The biggest most powerful media today is advertising. (Byrne, Interview with Toscani, 21st Sept 1993)

Toscani believes that art should be in the street amongst the people communicating to them.

"Why confine your work to the walls of a gallery when you've got the walls of the world". Toscani compares Luciano Benetton to one of the Medici's who has given him the freedom and the resources to express himself as no photographer has done in history. (Popham, 1993, pg 24-27)

The art world is very strange, very old-fashioned,"he says. "Art people are like those people who believe in God, in church there is God, in the Biennale or other exhibitions there is art. Bullshit! It's not true! It's interesting to have my work at the Biennale, but it's just one room!, and on the other hand I've got the walls of the world. In Times Square, in Tirana, I've got my pictures everywhere! It's incredible! (Karrfalt, vol.1008, 1994 *)

In June 1994 Benetton was invited to exhibit a decade of controversial advertising photography by Toscani in the six story Old England building in Brussels. Toscani's 6x3 metre posters were exhibited for the first time, in a 5,000 square metre floor space as they were originally intended, as tools of mass communication, aimed at a general worldwide audience, rather than at a narrow, artistic elite.

"Is advertising a form of avant garde art? Is it the task of the task of the avant garde to be provocative?"

These are the questions that visitors viewing all of Toscani's images would have to answer. ("Toscani Al Muro", press release*)

Another exhibition was held in June '94, in the Tokyo Corporate Art Museum in the Fukatake Publishing building in Tama centre. (Karrfalt, 28th June 1994 v.1008*)

More recently in the midst of the Serb/Croat war Toscani went to Croatia to open an exhibition at the HDLU Museum, the former museum of the Communist revolution. The exhibition featured all his startling and provocative imagery from the past decade working for Benetton. Benetton exhibited alongside artists from Dubrovnik. When asked if his campaigns are in bad taste. Toscani's reply,

"Art is meant to be controversial. This is not tasteless. War is tasteless, as is segregation, racism, religion.....". (Giovanni, 4 Dec '94).

The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Kilmainham was offered a decade of Benetton billboard images to exhibit last year as part of the Italian festival. After discussions with the organisers of the festival and through their advertising agency

IMMA would only agree to present the billboard images if they could create debate around the images, according to Declan McGonagel,

"We would not present them to validate them, We would present them to question them."

However the organisers could not confirm Toscani would attend or that anybody else from Benetton could come over to engage in debate, so then Mr McGonagel suggested they put other exhibitions of certain types of photographs beside the Benetton images, so that there could still be debate around the ads if there were no Benetton people at the exhibition. (Doyle, Interview, McGonagel, IMMA 16th Dec ,1994).

We didn't engage in the project because just putting the images in a museum validates them as art on one level, so we were trying to create a context in which the images would be questioned and whether it is because they didn't like that idea or didn't want to know but we decided anyway that we weren't doing it. (Doyle, McGonagel, IMMA, 16th Dec ,1994).

The question as to whether Benetton's images are valid as art is debatable, as is their appropriation of artistic techniques. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LES LEVINE, MEDIA ARTIST

There was an attempt to dematerialise the art object in the sixties to change the nineteenth century inheritance of the status of the art object in the way you define it's value. Les Levine would have been part of a generation working in Canada and America that was experimenting with that in terms of his work. There are many media artists but Levine tends to think about the public domain much more or more regularly than other artists. Levine is very singular in having done this consistently over a long period. He hasn't pulled back from dealing with issues of public domain.

John Perrault, Art Critic, Past president of International Association of Art Critics, has noted:

in the sixties I thought it was wonderful that someone so normal looking could come up with artworks that infuriated almost everyone. The very idea that an artwork could be plastic, could be disposable, could be an environment or a situation or even an advertisement drove people crazy. I remember an otherwise civilised filmmaker threatening to punch me in the mouth because I had written about Levine. (Greenwald, 1990, pg110-111)

Les Levine was born in Dublin on 23 Pembroke road on the 6th october 1935. He lived there until about aged fourteen when his family emigrated to Canada.

Les Levine has worked in the area of conceptual art for twenty years, making video works, photographic works, film, audio tapes, conceptual paintings and sculptures, installations, performance work and more.

Levine's work is not intended to make a statement, like traditional art aggressive, anti-art. But his art waits to be defined within the mind of the viewer. (Les Levine, Lecture

28th Aug. 1994).

Levine would see himself as being a media sculptor. Instead of using materials the way artists use them such as paint, bronze, wood etc. Levine uses media. He sculpts media. Sculpture is something that involves itself in very specific activities, gravity, weight, mass, form, relationship, all these kinds of things. Levine thinks it easier to explain or describe things two-dimensionally rather than three-dimensionally. He's never seen a sculpture, in his opinion, that really works. Levine thinks that if you take all the same issues and relationships dealt with in 3D and produce them in 2D, then you are dealing with sculpture as far as he is concerned.

Levine deals with sculpture from a media perspective. Media images are all around us, inside and out.

Levine believes that one of the strengths of advertising and the media is what he calls

"infectious connection", whereby one person sees an image, absorbs it, and translates it to somebody else.....

"It doesn't have the same degree of immunisation as a painting or sculpture, where you would actually have to be present personally to witness it, to experience it". (Interview with Les Levine, 1985, by Declan Mc Gonagle)

It is not necessary, according to Levine, for a lot of people to see an advertisement, for that advertisement to affect a community. It is this idea and the techniques of advertising which Levine is relying on to create his work. Levine believes that art has the potential to bring about change. Levine doesn't think art can change the fabric of society. He means it has the ability to give you a different way of looking at issues. It can bring about a change of mind.

Levine tries to use his art for this purpose. But his images are incomplete. They don't give answers. They just provoke questions. It is left to the audience to fill in the miss-



Fig:2



Fig:3

Les Levine, 1989 'Green House' (fig:2). 'Brand new', (fig:3).

ing blanks or connections to resolve the problem. For example 'Green House'(fig:2) and 'Brand new'(fig:3).

Levine believes that not only is it important to use the media effectively but his work must make a contribution to the medium. Levine is not only interested in the content. He is interested in using art to take risks that the rest of society cannot take or doesn't want to take. Levine feels that this process can be used to examine any issue in society. Levine believes that artists must make images that put their life's on the line. People need to see imagery from artists with this sort of approach. (McGonagel, interview, Les Levine, ICA London 1985 pg 43).

They're very hot images, and as it is with any hot thing they can be bounced around by many people at different level.(Quote Les Levine, McGonagel at ICA London 1985 pg44).

This statement brings to mind the Benetton images and all the controversy and debate generated by media attention.

One difference between art and advertising is that ads select an unthinking audience and tell it what to think or what to do or buy. While art, ideally tries to provoke people to perceive and think for themselves. (Levine, lecture IMMA 28th Aug '94).

Benetton with it's shock campaign provokes reaction and invites the viewer to question their own prejudices. Is Benetton echoing the media artists like Levine? Certainly there are many similarities between Benetton's approach to "sponsoring awareness" and media artists "advertising of ideas", But to what extent and where does commercialism come into play to effect motives? Both Toscani's and Levine's work involve shock and provocation.

LEVINE,ART AS ADVERTISING

All advertising is based on emotion. Levine's mass media campaigns are structured to provoke emotional response. Stirring peoples emotions play an important role in Levine's work, as it does in all advertising. This sort of anxiety is used by advertisers to promote desire, hence sale through structural mechanisms that emphasises the individuality of the consumer while paradoxically and deliberately feeding off the consumer's need for self-meaning and understanding.

Levine plays on this idea of anxiety and develops it into persuasive positive force in the context of his billboards. The billboards become, as the artist has stated, "props" that aid the public in their understanding of their own value systems. This experience, although a public one, gets to the depth of private feelings and through the billboard media, is intended to generate for the public a vision of their uniqueness,a uniqueness Levine says:

"which they always had before my work".
(Greenwald,1990, pg 32)

Levine's objective, as an unannounced exchange with the public on issues that are of concern to him results in the blurring of distinctions that separate art and advertising.This blurring derives from the artist's manipulation of cultural signs, social contexts, visual conventions, and communication systems and has given Levine's mass media campaigns their impact and importance. (Greenwald, 1990, pg 32)

Levine's most successful billboard campaigns have had themes running through them such as violence, consumer ethos, self-awareness, national pride, bad faith, racism.

In 1982 Levine realised his first mass media project "we

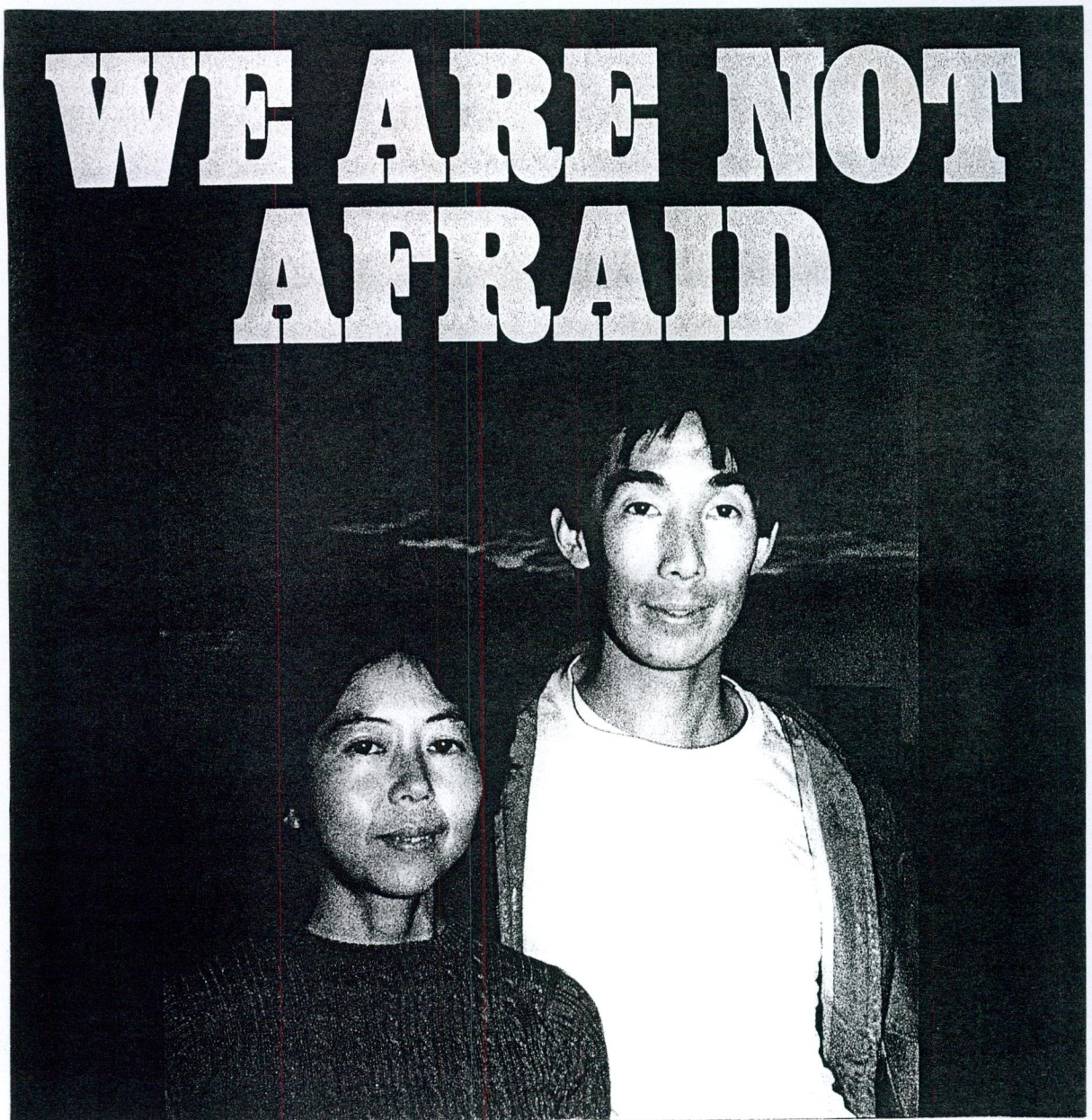


Fig:4

Les Levine, 1982 "we are not afraid" (fig:4)

are not afraid"(fig:4). This was the first of it's kind done anywhere in the world. More than four thousand of his posters were put up in all the main subway lines in New York.

Levine is most interested in getting involved in ideas and "We are not afraid"(fig:4) was one of those ideas. It got an enormous amount of attention in New York. The space which Levine used to advertise his posters in the subway were the most desirable advertising spaces and were usually reserved for banks and car manufacturers. Levine followed the rules of subway advertising while, still using techniques he had developed in other advertising related projects. These same posters had been exhibited three years prior in various exhibitions throughout Europe. The "we are not afraid " poster features an oriental couple against a dusk sky. This simple yet attractive image is combined with the text, "We are not afraid" in bright red, two-inch high lettering. The woman looks serenely at us as the man stares dreamily beyond the camera., out of the frame of the picture. The text of the image implies another layer of meaning without actually supplying it. The open-ended phrase we are not afraid, prompts a series of questions, firstly, about the couple and what they are saying through their expressionless stare through and beyond the camera. "We are not afraid", Not afraid of what?, And why not? The public reacted to these posters immediately. The viewer starts to feel like questions are being directed at himself. It's like the couple saying "we are not afraid? Are you?. And if so, why are you?. And if you are, would you like to know why we are not?" (Greenwald, 1990, pg36)

The image suggests to the viewer a resolution to the problem of urban violence but at the same time the message is ambiguous. The Slogan seems to suggest more without supplying it, and the image of the gentle relaxed impassive orientals,

placed in the public domain of inter-racial violence and crime suggest racial neutrality as well as serenity and wisdom. The work seems to sum up a variety of urban concerns and hopes. (Greenwald,1990, pg36)

Ads are like little morality plays. Their characters are intended as everyman figures, while the stories they depict pose catechisms, salvation is linked to the use of some product" (Levine, 1982, pg 100-106)

The "product" being sold in his work is serenity and peace. One could read religious overtones in the work as one person did on the subway and wrote, "Jesus is King" across the man's T-shirt. Asked why he used orientals in his image Levine explained,

In the context of the subways, one of the main areas where races and classes confront each other everyday, the couple can be seen as neutral-"people" neither black nor white, rich nor poor.(Levine, 1982 pg 100-106)

It is hard to gauge the effectiveness of Levine's campaigns on the public in the absence of the usual follow-up market surveys along with sales that goes along with ad campaigns. Levine has however received a large volume of letters about pieces, indicating at least some level of response. The fact that after the first couple of days people were stealing the posters to hang on their walls indicates their popularity.

Today Levine would still regard "we are not afraid" as his most successful campaign. Not because of heightened public awareness and questioning, but because in his opinion,

the campaign produced enormous amounts of encouragement and empowerment towards the concept that anybody can use the media to express an artistic idea and also it acted like an empty prop on a public stage, which is to say that everybody who saw it filled it with the nature of their own mind. Twenty different people when asked what it meant gave twenty different answers. But it encouraged

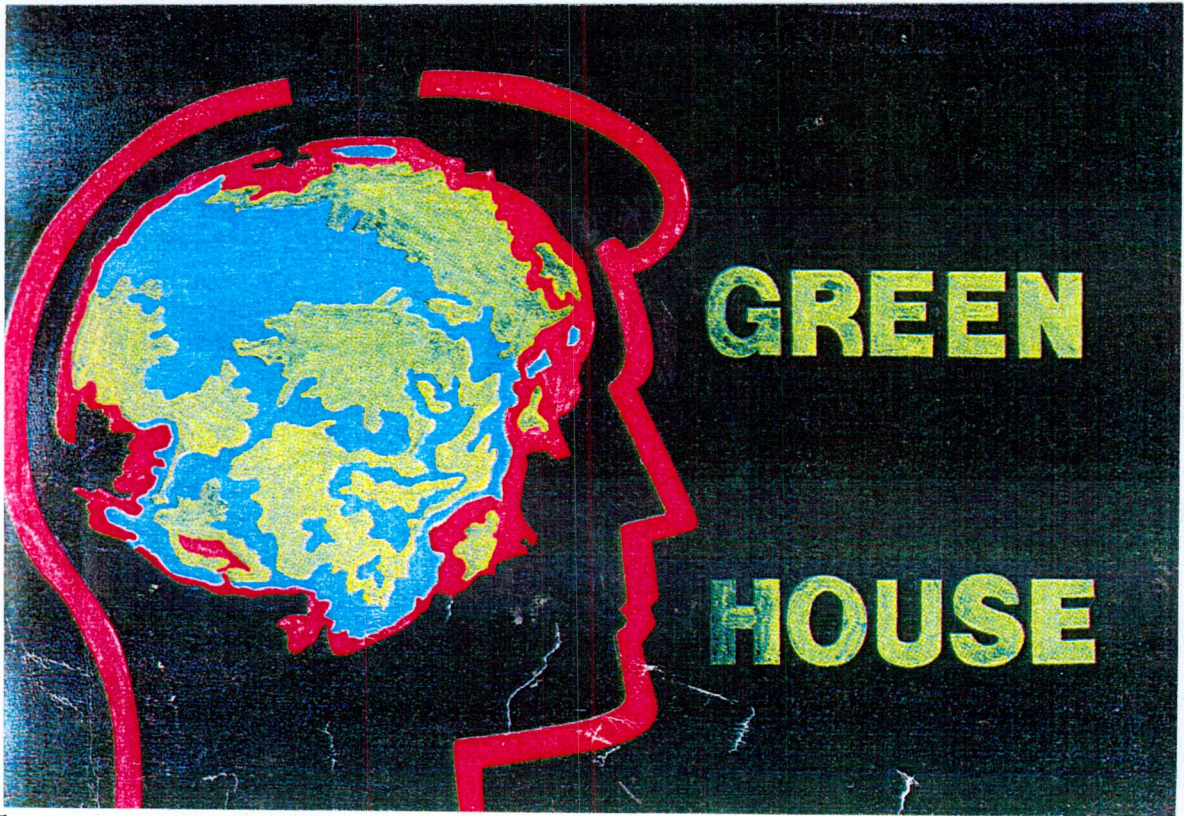


Fig:5

Les Levine 1989 "Green House", water colour, (fig:5)

people to realise that they are to some degree what they see. What they see is a result of their own personal projections and in examining those they get better insights into their own moral, ethical, psychological, and perceptual position to society at large. (Doyle, faxed Qs to Levine, 1994, IMMA)

This view echoes Oliviero Toscani's claims about what his aims were in presenting potentially stereotypical images in his campaign on racial contrast in 89/90. Images like the angel/devil ad (fig:35), the black and white men hand-cuffed together (fig:34), or the black woman breastfeeding the white baby (fig:33). If you view these images as racist according to Toscani, you are projecting your own views on to the image.

Commenting on the "we are not afraid" image Levine says when people look at public information, they are personally in a very private mind and one good result of offering the public information is to make a connection with responsive ideas which hopefully are encouraging to the viewer because the ideas interest them. (Doyle, Faxed questions Levine Dec 1994 .)

In 1989 Levine took part in the Dortmund billboard project. This was a project created in order to show concern over Environmental degeneration and Nuclear arms build-up. Levine's billboard image showed a red-outlined profile of a man's head on a blank background. The man's head in the image contains a large planet Earth shaped loosely to look like a brain. The top of the man's head has a very suspicious looking hole in it. The words "Green House" (fig:5) in large green block letters are placed to the right of the profile across the areas of the eyes and mouth. The visual mix between brain and earth is supposed to be a sort of visual metaphor for the viewer. When "Joe Public" looks at this image they are invited to make associations between the seriousness of having a hole in the ozone layer and having a hole



Fig:6



Fig:7

Les Levine 1989 "Consume or perish" (fig:6)

Les Levine "pray for more" (fig:7)

in one's head deep enough to expose the brain. This image causes anxiety in the viewer and provokes questioning. The words "Green House" placed along side the image makes you focus directly on the message the artist is trying to communicate by drawing parallels between hole in your head and hole in the ozone layer. This anxiety is then relieved when the "product" is the idea you understand.(Greenwald,1990, pg18)

In 1989 did another subway project involving two images called "Consume or perish"(fig:6) and "pray for more" (fig:7).

Consume or perish features Michelangelo's David chopped in half against a red background with blue block letters outlined in white forming the words "consume or perish".

Levine likes to refer to his work as public art because it concerns itself with the public mind. Levine leaves the image's interpretations up to the viewer. Levine's commenting on the images does however offer some thoughts about the two images. Firstly he says that the consume or perish and pray for more refer to art and society. He says that he makes art from what he sees, and from what can be turned into images that represent our society. Levine places his ad in subways alongside other ads because he doesn't want his work to stand out separately as art. He wants people to accept the images as pieces of information in the environment. Levine's intention was that the images be seen as advertisements alongside traditional ads on the subway. Levine wants to do what advertising does; contact the public without any initiative on their part. The questions Levine wishes to raise with the images are about attitudes that exist in society and art today. Although his ad posters act as art, they are not precious art objects. After the exhibition they'll be torn down like any other advertisement. Nothing here of the 19th century idea of art as some-

thing that lives forever. (Levine, 1989,pg19)

It's become like pop records. Something will number one in the charts today, and tomorrow you're embarrassed you ever heard of it. Images that once shocked are now totally neutral. Entropy is setting in at a phenomenal rate. It's legitimate to ask what possible function art can have any more. Certainly it's previous function won't work anymore" (Carty, 1986,pg 12)

The questions Levine asks in "consume or perish" are "Is art consuming itself now? Is art the consumer product? Are we on the verge of consuming the whole world? Levine is using art to confront advertising and advertising to confront art"(Carty, 1986,pg 12)

Levine got the idea for consume or perish from the sixties expression publish or perish. Consumption appears to be an inevitable part of our economic health now.

The image pray for more features two hands holding a praying mantis with the words above the hand in white block caps, "saying praying for more". This is a reference to Michelangelo's Pieta instead of holding the body of christ though the two hands hold a praying mantis. The hands are the "hands of pity" and they hold the praying mantis which is meant to represent the delicate balance of our environment, which has to be looked after and protected. (Levine, 1989, pg19).

Levine in his "consume or perish" uses flat blocks of silk-screen colour indicating volume and form. This style emerged between 1980 and 1982 after Levine experimented with coloured plasticine which he laid out in flat shapes over window screens. Levine used this plasticine technique in order to re-evaluate his successful use of photographic images and words, as in the "we are not afraid" (fig:4) project.

Levine wanted to have a flat, simple advertising style. Our environment is so flooded with all sorts of photographic

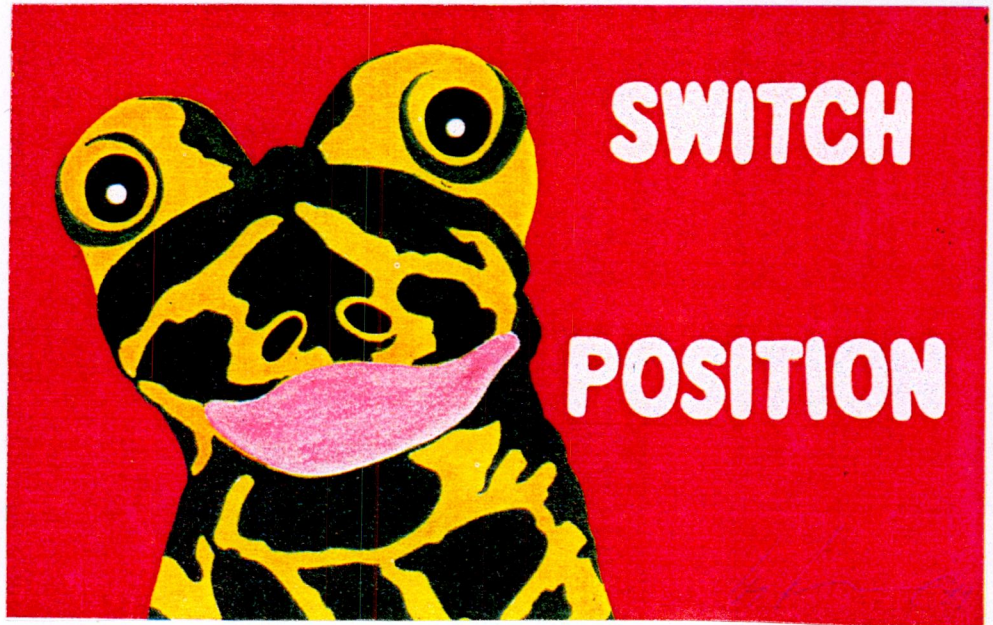


Fig:8

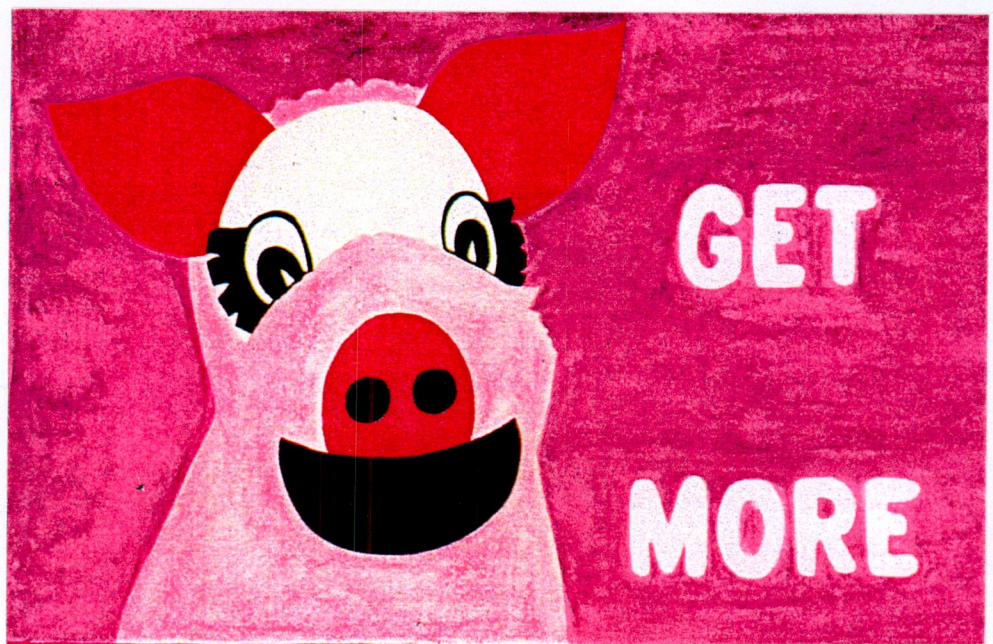


Fig:9

Les Levine 1989 "switch position", (watercolour, fig:8)

Les Levine "Get More" (watercolour, fig:9)

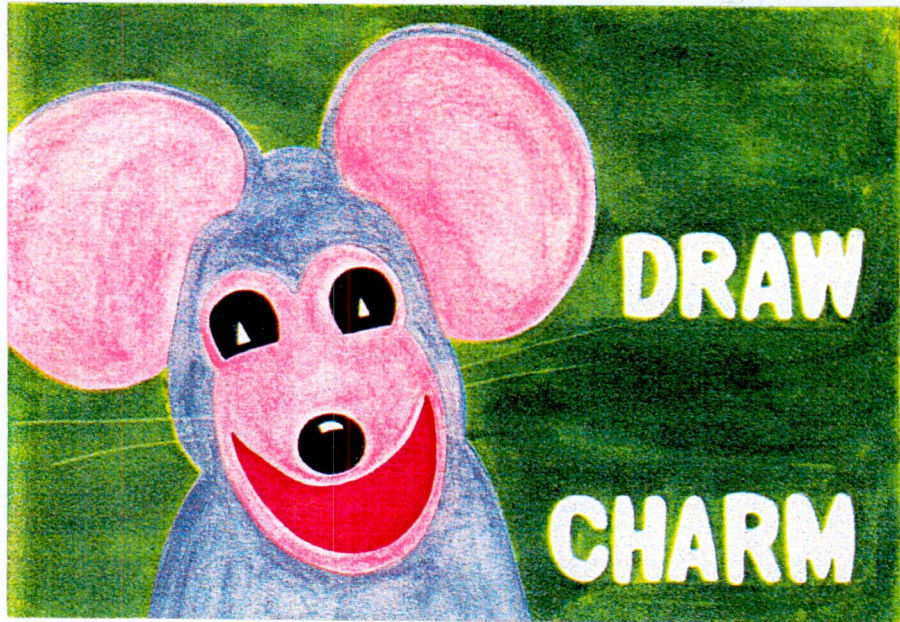


Fig:10



Fig:11

Les Levine "Draw Charm" (watercolour, fig:11)

Les Levine "Brand New" (watercolour, fig:10)



Fig:12

Les Levine 'Switch Position and Brand New subverting other advertisements' (fig:12)

imagery from advertising that Levine wanted to create an image that stood out against this photographic advertising jungle. Levine discovered that by using strong giant blocks of colour in his billboard images that they had a raw force photographic images lacked. With the multitude of advertising billboards around the cities photographic images become so familiar you don't pay any attention to them. Levine comments,

I wanted to invent a way to get higher vision, more immediate vision. To stand out against all this background (Greenwald, 1990, pg 36)

Brand New 1989 followed "consume or perish" in Frankfurt. The campaign featured lively cartoon images of a pig, a frog, a mouse, and a rooster. Onto these images the words "Get More" (fig:9), "switch position" (fig:8) "Draw Charm" (fig:11) and "Brand New" (fig:10) are superimposed. The function of these images is not to be appreciated visually as art.

Levine wanted these billboards to subvert advertising, he wanted them to act as modifiers when they are placed alongside commercial advertising billboards on the street. On their own these billboards are striking as commands, but once placed beside another billboard ad it modifies, as did the image of a perky frog which had the words switch position superimposed on it. When the switch position image was placed beside a cigarette or beer ad it suggests a change of action maybe not to smoke or drink. (fig:12). (Greenwald, 1990, pg 18)

Continuing the idea of subverting advertising techniques in 1987 Levine completed his "Forgive Yourself" (fig:13) campaign in Kassel for Documenta 8. Fifty installations in different public places. These works consisted of simplified images taken from oil pastel drawings done by Levine which arose

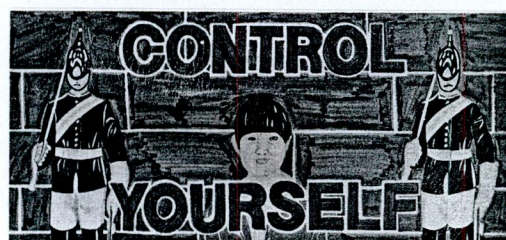
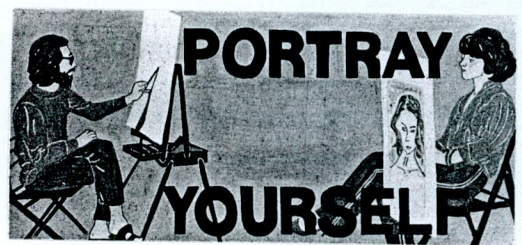
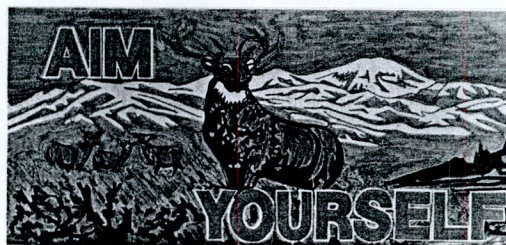
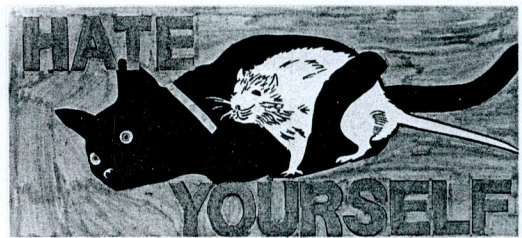


Fig:13

Les Levine 1987 "Forgive Yourself" campaign in Kassel
for Documenta 8 (fig:13)

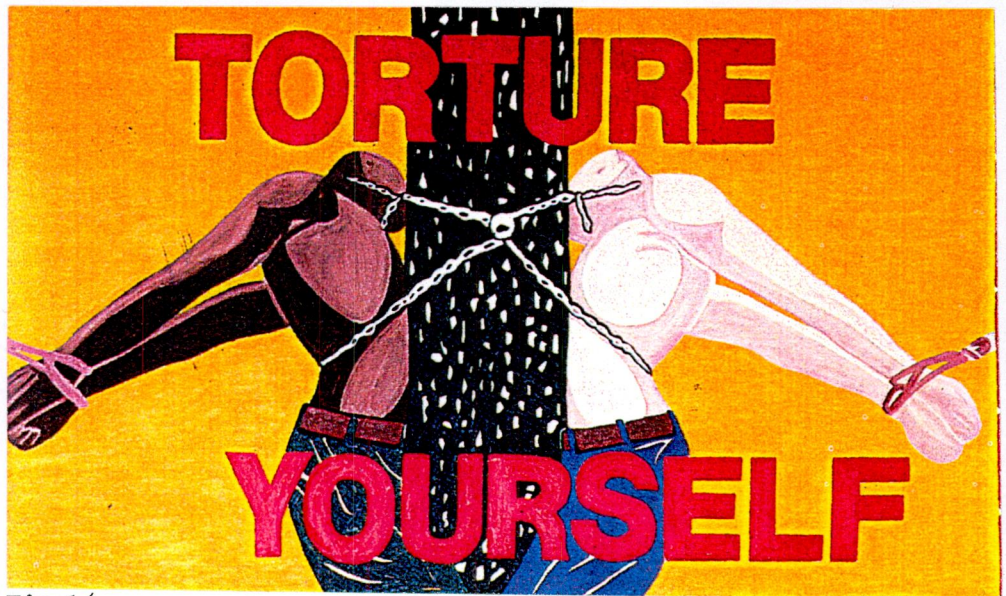


Fig:14



Fig:15

Les Levine **Torture Yourself** (fig:14)

Les Levine **Control Everyone** (fig:15)



Fig:16



Fig:17

Les Levine **Forget Yourself** (fig:16)

Les Levine **Play everyone** (fig:17).

from photographs taken by him from press and fashion photography. The text superimposed onto the image consists of two words, the second word remaining the same in every poster with only the first word changing; Forgive Yourself (fig:22), Consume Yourself, Lead Yourself (fig:20), Seduce Yourself, Sell Yourself, Create Yourself (fig:19), Hate Yourself (fig:21) Free Yourself, Starve Yourself, Torture Yourself (fig:14), Control Everyone (fig:15), Forget Yourself (fig:18) Play everyone (fig:17). The messages on these billboards are meant to be read metaphorically by multi-national audiences.

Levine uses the advertising technique of luring the consumer to consider the product or service provided as a reward or a solution to his or her deserved needs; eg. "take a break, take a Kit Kat...". The product in the context of Levine's boards is the idea, the message. This technique allowed Levine to prompt the public into self-examination on the issues and questions of public and private identity and beliefs. German national identity and the burdens of its psychological history after World War Two are addressed in several of the works, but only two billboards contain visual references to the holocaust: the image of concentration camp prisoners behind barbed wire in the billboard "Free Yourself" (taken from Margaret Bourke White's photograph of the liberation of buchenwald), and the simplified image of Anne Frank in "Forgive Yourself". (Greenwald, 1990, pg 39)

In Master yourself (fig:18), Create Yourself (fig:19), Lead Yourself (fig:20) Levine uses Germanic cultural stereotypes as if to bring again a sense of national self-inquiry. Other billboard images generate a response by presenting the viewer with emotional cliches, on the expected submissive behaviour of the new generation of Germans as in Starve Yourself, Hate Yourself (fig:21), Forgive Yourself (fig:22). Levine's aim in the



Fig:18



Fig:19



Fig:20



Fig:21



Fig:22

- Master yourself (fig:18)
- Create Yourself (fig:19)
- Lead Yourself (fig:20)
- Hate Yourself (fig:21)
- Forgive Yourself (fig:22)

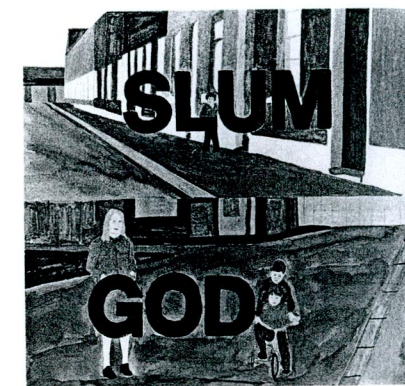
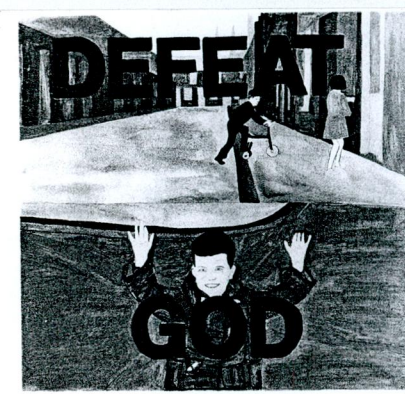
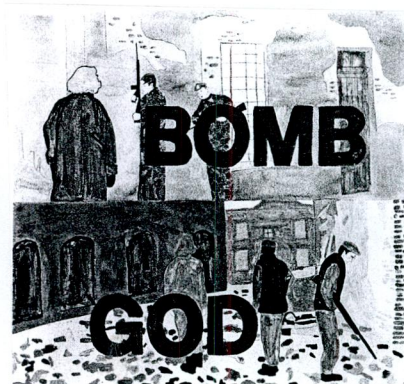


Fig:23

Forgive Yourself project was to sell to people the idea of setting themselves free by forgiving themselves of their past.(Greenwald,1990, pg39).

One has to forgive oneself artistically and historically as no one else has a larger stake in it. I wanted to do something positive. That could make the audience see that their dualistic negativism could be turned on them. No matter how risky, each of us has to take the first step. We truly have to be willing to die for what we believe in. That may mean giving up our mental body so that something new mentally can occur. By giving our body I mean the body of our history and our attachment". (Quote Les Levine Media, projects and public ads Lucerne Mai 36 Galerie 1988 pg10).

The public response to the campaign was very strong and rather complicated. Some liked it and others hated it. Nevertheless, Levine would say the best way to judge a campaign is retrospectively. Levine thinks most people in Germany today would agree something has been added to the argument. The normal response in Germany amongst the young people has always been to be full of angst and hope that the world would forgive for obvious reasons. The implication of this project was that forgiveness starts from within and that blaming produces duality. So therefore in Levine's opinion his position was appreciated. (Doyle,faxed questions to Les Levine 1994.IMMA).

Up till this point Levine has used many advertising techniques among them provocation to incite anxiety, emotional response and then questioning and introspection on the part of the viewer.

In Levine's latest campaign "Blame God"(fig:23) shock appears to be the strategy used to draw the viewer into the idea the images. This strategy of shock has been used in a few advertisements now, but it is more significant with the Benetton campaigns than any other advertisers. In "Blame

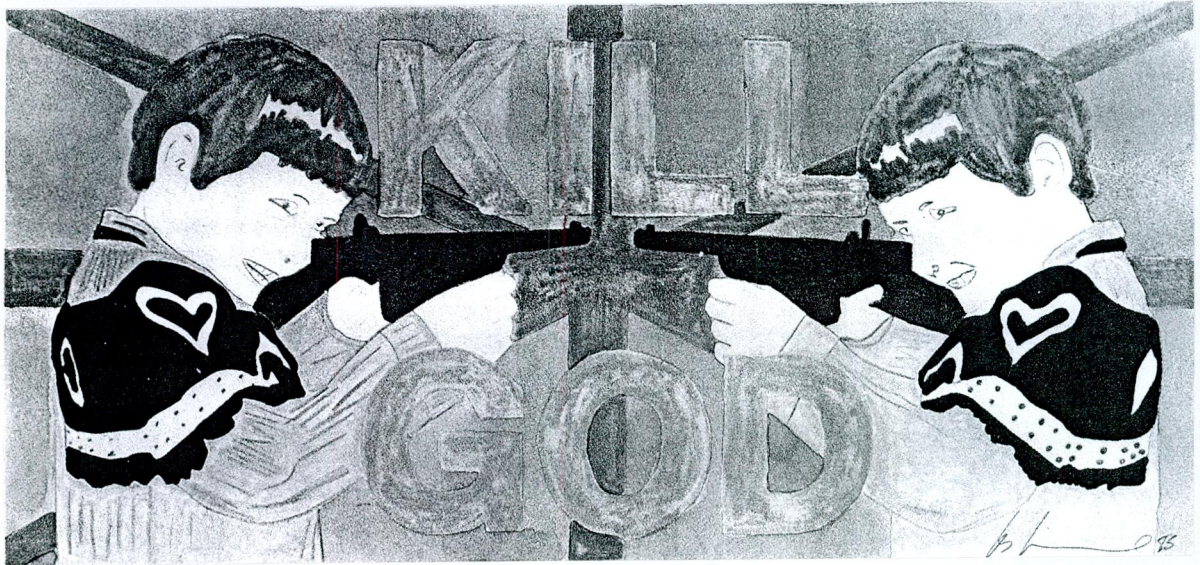


Fig: 24

God", "Forgive Yourself" and "Brand New" Levine has raised the level of meaning of these billboards posters by having a social or historical undercurrent in varying degrees.

"Blame God" was first shown in London, 1985 in Londonderry, 1986 in Dublin and more recently as part of the "Beyond The Pale" exhibition currently showing at IMMA in 1994/1995.

The campaign of twenty different images and these were posted on forty billboards in each country at a time. At the London and Dublin exhibitions in '85 and '86 full size replicas were installed in the galleries. The 1994 exhibition at IMMA however only posted full size images on billboards outside the gallery while inside they exhibited the twenty original drawings or roughs for the billboards. Each billboard image originates from photographs taken by Levine in the North of Ireland. Levine having spent a short period in Northern Ireland investigating "The Troubles: An Artist's Document of Ulster", produced an exhibition of explicit materials that documented the terrible daily turmoil that the Catholics and Protestants were faced with. Levine's aim was to bring his art back to its source in the North.

The twenty images contained two words each, the second in each was the same, God. Sell God, Lose God, Starve God, Attack God, Torture God, Blast God, Fight God, Block God, Forgive God, Execute God, Hate God, Kill God, (fig:24) Bury God, Defeat God, Slum God, Bomb God, Create God, Protect God, Play God, Parade God and Control God.

In Judeo-Christian theology God is taken in the same sense to be the source of all action. In "Blame God" (fig:23) he is presented as passive to our action. As a product of our action God is taken to be something created by us. Eg "Create God" (fig:.. According to Thomas McEvelley, contributing editor



Fig:25

Les Levine Starve God (fig:25)

to Artforum Magazine, we create God in theology. If you take three different theological positions, of Atheism, Theism and Pantheism and view the billboards from each of these positions you get a range of meanings.

From a Theistic point of view "Kill God"(fig:24), might mean get rid of the church, destroy religion,(making a statement like that in Ireland, it's not surprising the campaign shocked and outraged!) After initial shock the viewer begins to question what does it mean to kill God?, How can you kill God anyway? and thought is provoked.

From an Atheistic point of view the billboards could mean get rid of the idea of using the power of God to control others, maybe the church. The billboards do not take a position, they do not tell you from which position to judge them. They simply question but do not give an answer.

The Pantheistic point of view is that everything is seen as being of God, ie: God is Everything. From this viewpoint the Kill God, image with the two boys shooting at each other is God killing God. Starve God (fig:25) also suggests from this viewpoint that to let people die from starvation in, let's say, Somalia, is to starve God and similarly to execute people in Northern Ireland is to execute God and so on. The idea is based on the gospel according to St. Matthew. (Lucerne Mai 36 Galerie New York Interview by Ted Greenwald Dec1988pg 13).

I was hungry and you gave me eat, I was thirsty and you gave to drink, I was a stranger and you gave me welcomed, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me, I tell you the truth, Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me". (Bible New Testament Matthew 25).

These images are in no way meant to be blasphemous. It seems to me to be entirely valid to extend the scriptures to the situation in the North, in as much as you attack one of these

the least of my brethren, Kill one of these the least of my brethren and you do it to me so as a christian I am appropriating these words as expressing quite accurately the spirit of the gospel as well as expressing Levine's very interesting political view that the British media are portraying the Troubles as mere religious warfare in order somehow to downgrade their significance as the last kick of an old-fashioned colonial war.

Sixteen of the twenty verbs used on the billboards indicate actions the government take during warfare. The words "forgive" and "create" are usually associated with God. The word "play" isn't really an action connected with war, but the words "play God", in the context of the Northern question sum up the whole situation of governments and wars.(pg 10 Galerie 36 New York Interview with Declan McGonagel).

The project forced people to have an inquiring attitude. They'd say or think "well, why is God an issue now?". It freed the mind.....(for me) there was an element of mental risk involved here, a frightening mental risk. I asked myself "What are you permitted to advertise? What image are these works going to project of me to the public? It was an uncomfortable situation. I had to give myself the permission to become uncomfortable to generate dislike. I wrestled with the rightness or wrongness of the Blame God project. I resolved it this way. The extremity, the absoluteness of the position clarified this for me. (Quote Les Levine Thomas McEvelly The collaboration of word and image in the Art of Les Levine. London institute of contemporary Art 1985 pg 3 (Greenwald, 1990 pg 43)).

Levine's billboard images back in '85 in Britain, were not only about Northern Ireland and the British media centred reading of Northern Ireland but they were also about advertising languages. Levine's images were brutally simple. The colour was flat and the images were executed in a very old style of screen printing. This sort of billboard advertising wasn't common in the mid '80's because everything was super-glossy colour photography transferred to billboards. Levine's

images were really powerful when viewed alongside a certain type of glossy image that was used in traditional advertising. After "We are not afraid" (fig:4) Levine wanted to try and re-invent his own way of looking at images. He wanted to have a flat simple advertising style and the work that followed "we are not afraid" had that quality. Levine also recognised one thing, that,

When you go to a public environment, a subway, a street, whatever.....everything looks photographic. A person walking down the street looks like a person walking down the street in a photo. A car on the side of the street looks like a car in a photo of a car on the side of the street. I decided I should do something that doesn't look a photograph to try and go around this sort of half-grey environment that seems to exist in all cities. One of the things that interested me was, how could you bring giant blocks of colour in amongst all this. I found that the billboards around my billboards don't have the strength of force. They've become so familiar you simply don't see them. I wanted to invent a way to get higher vision, more immediate vision. To stand out against all this background. (Everson Museum of art Public Mind)

Even today, to a public deadened by images of violence, flat screen print images of "blame God" still manage to shock and assault the unsuspecting viewer on the street.

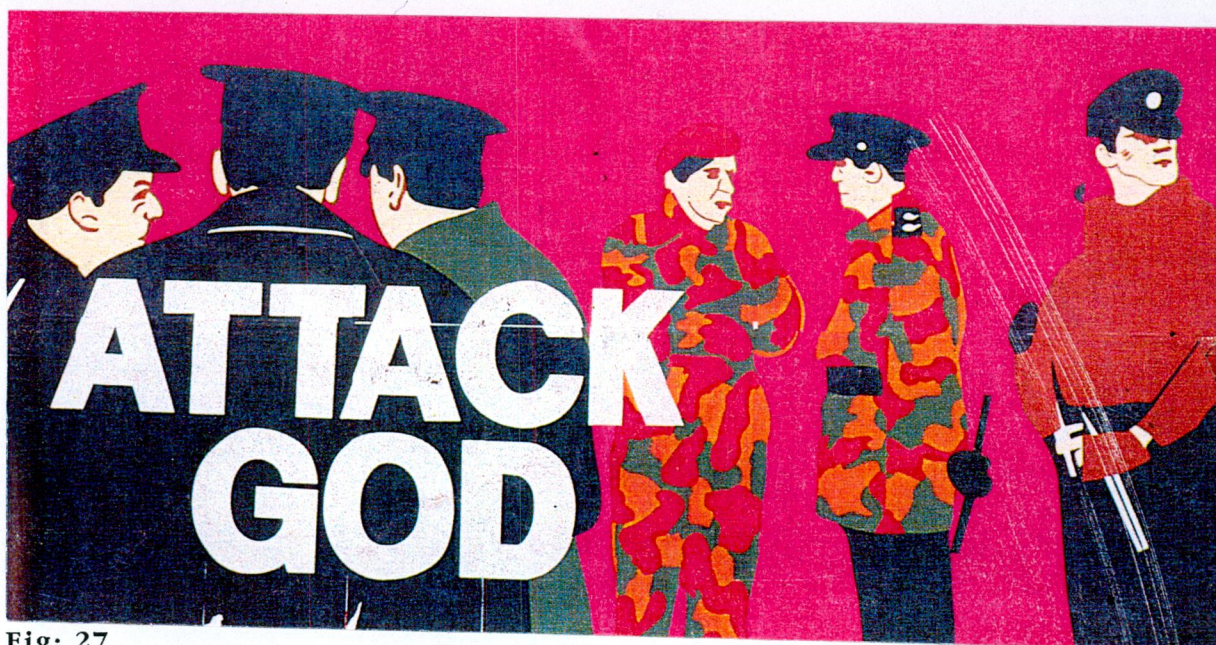


Fig: 27

TOSCANI, SHOCK AND PROVOCATION

Levine says that advertising works by creating anxiety. So it's essentially saying you are inadequate use this sun lotion, if you drink this beer, if you drive this car, if you smoke this cigarette, if you do whatever to own these things you will be adequate or more adequate. Levine subverts this kind of advertising. He does this by generating the same kind of anxiety, or in the case of "Blame God" the same kind of shock in his billboards. Levine wants to sell us his product, the idea. The idea is the process by which you alleviate the anxiety or shock.

In the case of "blame God" (fig:23), the shock leads to questioning of the image. Then this leads you to resolve these questions by your own personal projections of what the image is about. When you examine these judgements you get a better insight into your own moral, ethical and psychological and perceptual position to society at large.

Benetton images also create anxiety by shock and provocation, because we're in a slightly more ironic post-modern world. So people are reading images slightly differently. The Benetton image doesn't give you a resolution to the image though, except when you read United Colours of Benetton at the bottom, then you have a sense of why it's there. It's advertising.

Oliviero Toscani is creative director and photographer for Benetton's controversial advertising campaigns. Son of a photo-journalist he went to art school, studied photography and when he finished he started to photographically docu-

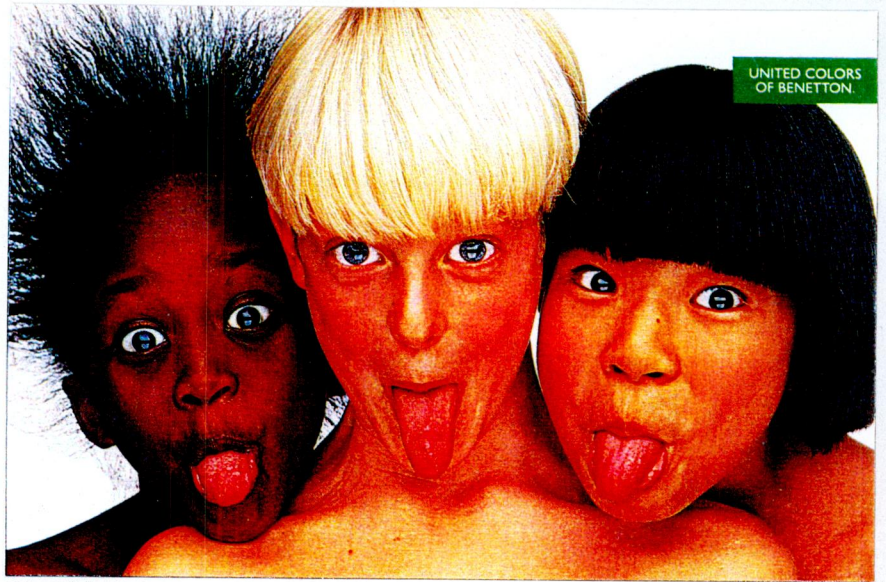


Fig:30



Fig :29

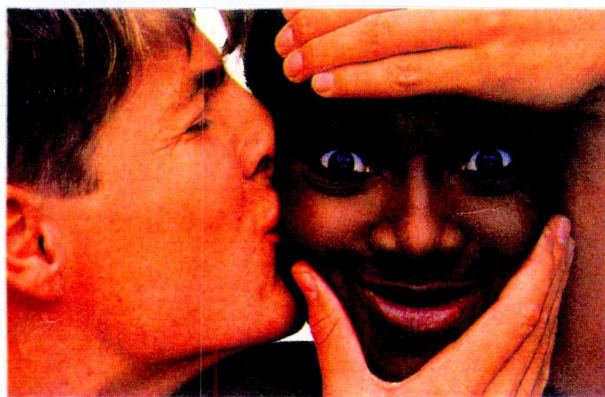


Fig:28

Oliviero Toscani **Global Unity**, (fig:28 & fig:29)
 Oliviero Toscani **Unit ed colours of contrast** (fig :30)



Fig:31

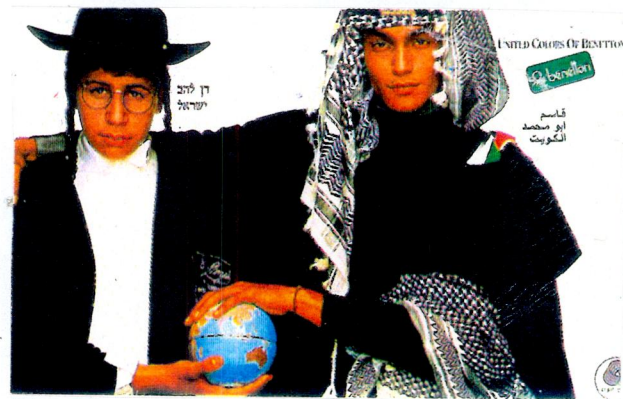


Fig:32

Oliviero Toscani **Global Unity.**(fig:31& 32)

menting his generation of the sixties. Mini skirts, long hair, beatles, these photographs got published in magazines at the time. Toscani became renowned for these type of photographs and as a result became involved in fashion photography.

Toscani regards himself as just a photographer, there to document what goes on in his life. (Without Walls, 1991 feb'94).

Between 1989/1990 the Benetton campaigns featured different races side by side in playful poses and smiling faces,(fig:28 & fig:29). There contrast was the theme of Benetton's early campaigns and the Benetton company targeted racial and ethnic differences as a theme suitable for a potential global market. Benetton featured stereotypical images of black, white, or Asian people for these campaigns and photographed them against a white background, the white background being a sort of neutral space, un-real, A-social, A-historical. (ie: the image of the black, white or Asian children with their tongues sticking out,(fig :30). The Benetton image of diversity of national cultures, in all their early campaigns, is that of figures presented and reduced to a stylised individual, eg: caricatures in National costumes with flags becoming signifiers for a national type. (fig:31& 32) Benetton presented all these national caricatures together in the same space all getting along and laughing playfully. The result is the idea of internationalism, a global community. (McCabe, 9th dec. 1994, NCAD)

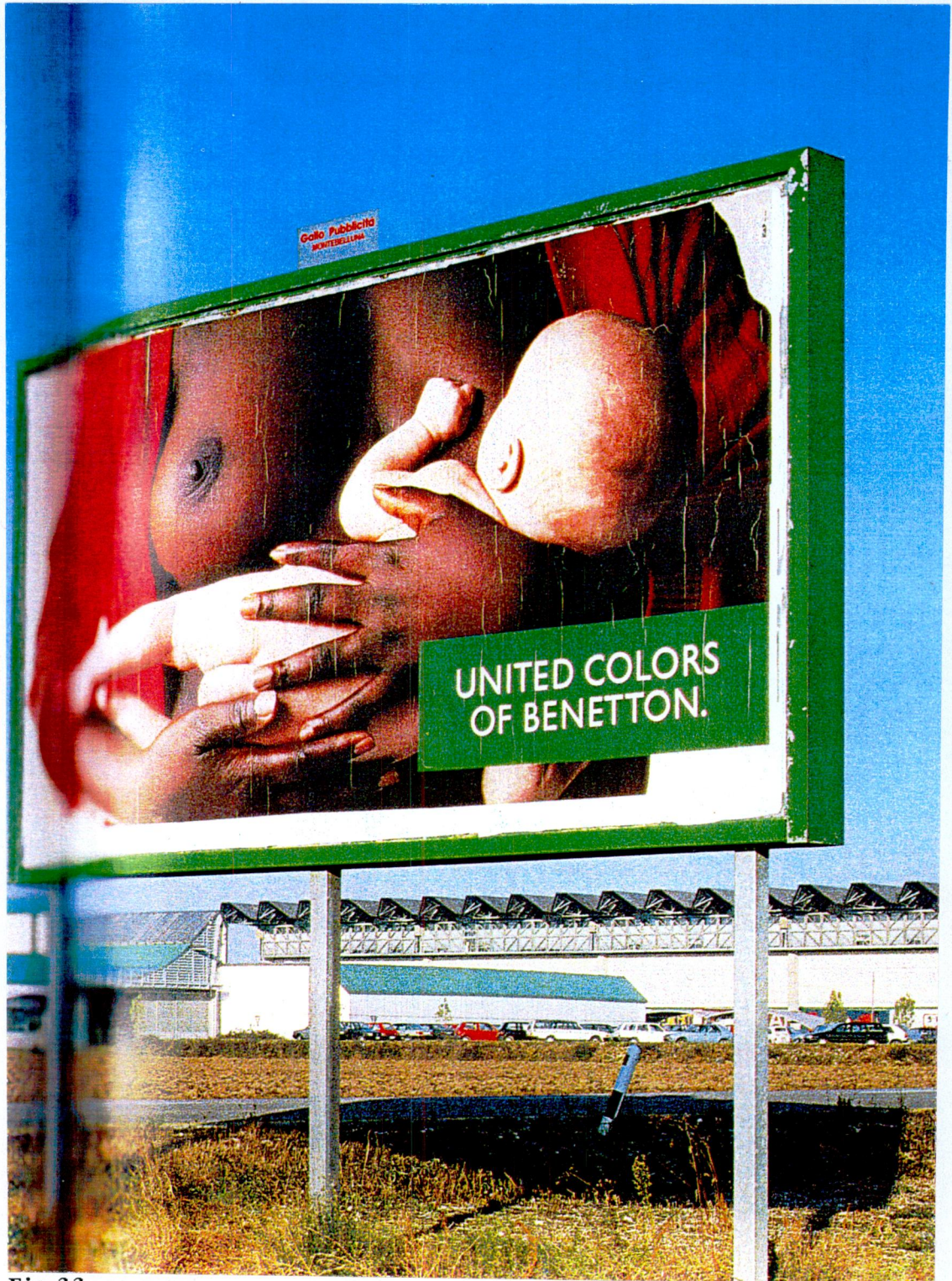


Fig:33

Oliviero Toscani **Blackwoman breast-feeding a white baby**,(fig:33)

PROVOCATION TACTICS

In 1989 Benetton changed their campaigns to one which explored the subject of equality between blacks and whites. It heralded the year where provocation became a motive of the Benetton ads and resulted in controversy and outrage. According to Luciano Benetton his advertising has a deeper significance than mere shock and provocation:

"We use our advertising space to communicate not about Benetton products but about the World". (Quote Luciano Benetton) He thinks his advertising has an increasingly social value. "It's not easy to understand the social importance in it but that is our objective despite the fact that the public does not understand it they are open to it." (Superchannel, Luciano Benetton, "Masters of Beauty" 21st Nov '94).

Like Levine Toscani provokes anxiety in the viewer. The campaign features a blackwoman breast-feeding a white baby, (fig:33). You cannot reproduce this in a magazine or billboard in America without people automatically associating it with the already deep rooted stereotypical Hollywood image of the black "mammy", the wet-nurse, in America. This is not a traditional Benetton model. Her hands are worn looking, her nails are short. As with Levine's billboard images the interpretation of the image is left up to the viewer. The image is taken out of context, and placed on a neutral background. The result, an interpretation based on the viewers cultural influences. People are shocked and outraged on viewing this image in America as it is seen as re-enforcing racial stereotypes. The same image viewed in Ireland wouldn't be viewed in such a way at all, because we haven't had a history of black and white racial conflict, our main stereotypical view of blacks is that of starving Somalians or Ethiopians in Africa. (Becker,



Fig:34



Fig:35

Oliviero Toscani **Handcuffed** (fig:34)

Oliviero Toscani 1991 **angel/devil** (fig:35)

1994, pg201).

Another image, the blackman and the whiteman handcuffed together (fig:34). This is another example of an ad that taps into America's racial consciousness. The image taps into fears of hostility toward blackmen, that blackmen are violent criminals and have to be controlled by whitemen. One could give another meaning to this image when viewed in the light of the L.A riots of may 1992. So in light of this, the handcuffed image would suggest that blacks must be controlled, ie: handcuffed to stop movement and thus presenting a threat to social order. (Perkins pg269 july/Aug'92).

Again this image is de-contextualised and placed on a neutral background so that the interpretation is left open to the viewer. In Ireland where we have no history of racial violence this image is totally ambiguous. Yet in America where the issues of race and the politics of race are highly contentious and disputed you have an uproar from the black community.

(Becker, 1994, pg202)

The 1991 image of angel/devil (fig:35) depicts an angelic looking white girl with beautiful blonde curly hair, embracing a black boy, his hair made to look like he has devilish horns. Toscani argues that the ads intention was to mock traditional racial-stereotypes. The little white girl is pure and innocent, the black boy represents evil, darkness. In fact the girl is meant to be the devil and the boy the angel. This image is again decontextualised so it's interpretation is left to the viewer.

With the three images so far the "Black woman breast-feeding the white baby"(fig:33),"The hand-cuffed blackman and whiteman" and the "Angel/devil" image (fig:35), Toscani and Benetton might say that the image is open to interpreta-

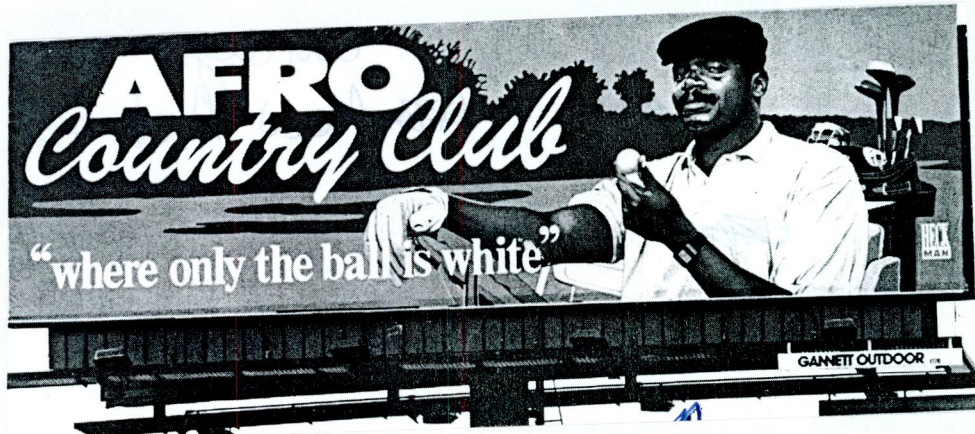


Fig:36

Mark Heckman, "Afro Country Club"(fig:36)

tion, the meaning is ambiguous. This idea only serves to absolve themselves of the responsibility and the meanings that are produced. The campaigns are intended to expose people's perceptions and prejudices. Whatever people's views are they'll project them onto the image ie:the people who see racism are racist or otherwise people who don't see racism in it , it's a re-affirmation of their social standing.(McCabe, NCAD, 1994 Dec 9th).

Another example of provocation in relation to imagery concerning racism is by media artist Mark Heckman. Heckman uses advertising to draw attention to the continuing incidence of racism in American culture. Heckman creates a fictitious billboard advertisement called the "Afro Country Club"(fig:36), with the moto "Where the ball is white" and portrays a black clubmember holding a white golf and the other resting on his golf cart.Heckman produces other billboards addressing issues such as Aids,Ozone depletion and deforestation. He chose golf as a "Metaphor for widespread racism because of the "country club" mentality". The reason why Heckman chooses billboards and advertising style for his politically orientated image are to escape the "elitism of the gallery setting".

The Afro Country Club has been his most successful project to date and after it's installation it provoked intense public reaction ranging from complaints and threats of vandalism to praise. After a couple of days the image was totally vandalised with racist messages such as "K.K.K", "nigger" and a swastika. Heckman's intention was to provoke and he was pleased with the strong response after which he removed the billboard because it served it's purpose and proved the point he was trying to get across. (Source:New Art Examiner V19 pg 12 Nov.'91*)

Levine's billboards are site specific sculptures, because

he believes that you have to produce something that will relate specifically to the environment in which it is found. (Mass Media Projects and Advertising Lucerne mai 36 1988 pg4).

Benetton, also aware of this and deliberately set out to provoke and shock in order to get media publicity. With Levine however the "Blame God" billboards were about communication the total process was not just shock. Levine's campaign was no more provocative than images of starving children in Africa which are meant to make you stop and think than act in a moral way. Levine is going out to provoke but it's not provocation for the sake of it, he wants people to take responsibility for their actions. (Doyle, Interview with McGonagle, 1994, IMMA)



Fig:37

Oliviero Toscani **The burning car image,(fig:37)**



Shock Tactics

No advertising campaign in history has provoked so much shock and controversy as Benetton has. In 1992 they began a new campaign called the shock of Reality. In this campaign Toscani used photojournalistic imagery. The public were so shocked by some of these images that five out of seven pictures were banned from publication. The degree to which an image shocks depends on customs, religious beliefs and taboos of the country in which the image appears. Benetton defends its use of shocking imagery by saying that the "truth" of these images is guaranteed by their purchase on reality. (Without Walls Toscani 1994 Feb Channel four)

The burning car image (fig:37), this was taken in Sicily, by Gian Luigi Bellini. This image was originally taken as a press photograph in the seventies. This image was reproduced on the Falls Road in Belfast and in Finglas Dublin. It is precisely to tap into those deep structures, those cultural codes about violence and politics and our own history that such an image effects. The reaction to that image produced in Scandinavia or Switzerland which have no history of terrorism or politically violence is going to be totally different from here. (McCabe 9th Dec 1994)

In Dublin an inner city Councillor claimed that the image would encourage local lads to do something by glorifying the whole subject. The poster caused protest and outrage in Finglas. (Horovitz, Tues. 24 March 1992).

The H.I.V Branded images in 1992, although not news photos, shocked nonetheless. The image which featured an arm (fig:38), a bottom (fig:39), and a lower abdomen each branded with the words H.I.V positive, caused shock and out-



Fig:38

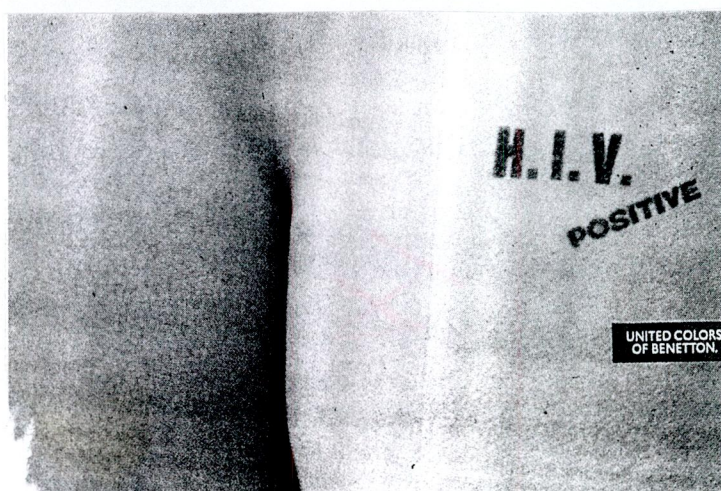


Fig:39

Oliviero Toscani 1992, **H.I.V Branded**, arm (fig:38),
 Oliviero Toscani **H.I.V Branded** bottom (fig:39)

rage especially among the gay community in Ireland. These images have been censored in France and legal action was taken by two government-backed Aids organisations.

The pictures taken by Toscani himself are

“metaphors for the extensive branding throughout society towards those who are different”.(Mac Mahon, oct.'92, pg15)

Toscani also wanted to highlight not only the channels through which H.I.V is contracted but also to point out the dangers of branding certain social groups and their lifestyles.(MacMahon, Oct'92, pg 15).

In Germany this image was banned because a court in Frankfurt ruled that the campaign breached German advertising laws and was in bad taste because it evoked memories of World War Two concentration camp victims.(Liberation 24/03/94).*

The image of a blood-soaked uniform of a fallen Croat warrior was Benetton's plea for World peace. It was banned in Germany because again a court in Frankfurt ruled it evoked memories of World War Two concentration camps. (Wall street journal Europe Vol 4 15/03/'94).

Murder in Palermo (fig:40), Benetton uses this image to comment on continuous regional and civil strife and confrontations in countries throughout the World. This image was censored due to the troubles in the North. An image like that would be extremely shocking and upsetting to those who had lost loved ones through regional conflict.

Levine's billboards also effect people differently in different cultural contexts. The reason why there was immediate reaction to "Blame God" in audiences like Ireland was the fact that Levine used the word "God". To some in very religious countries that's blasphemous .In other places he's used a sort of quieter approach, but different words have different



Fig:40

significance in different contexts so in a German context because of this terrible guilt that certain generations feel in Germany which even affects young people because they have to work through it themselves even though they have absolutely nothing to do with the Holocaust, there's a guilt within the German contemporary character. Levine is saying forgive yourself. Levine does, calculate how things will work and that again is proof that he is not simply trying to provoke randomly or unintentionally or unconsciously or accidentally. Levine is trying to get people to think about certain ideas that are present in society and in the particular environment in which the images are presented. So "Forgive Yourself" would work in Germany but somewhere else it might not. "Blame God" is on the same level. If there wasn't media interest there wouldn't be the same charge to the campaign. (Doyle, Interview with McGonagle 1994 s Doyle).

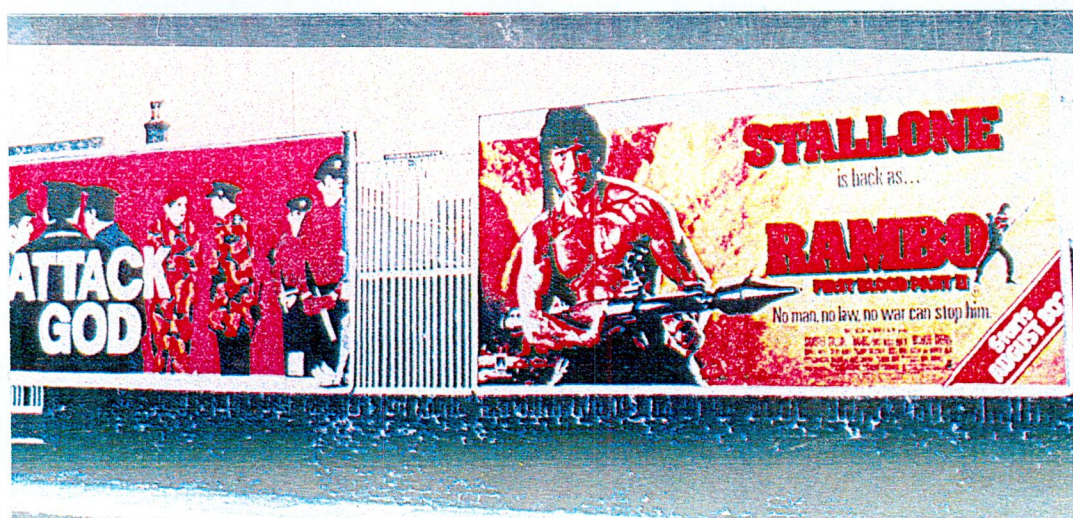
Public reaction to the "Blame God" campaign in London 1985 and Dublin 1994 was very strong. In 1994, IMMA ended up in the high court in Dublin because a fundamentalist Catholic Group called Christian Community in Action took them to court and wanted to take an injunction both against the particular project but also, against the museum trying to do anything like that again, so there was strong reaction in Dublin.

The differences in reaction between London and Dublin were, that in London the first three or four images were put in place and the ICA got a call from the billboard company saying that the police had told them to stop putting up the billboard images. The organisers of the exhibition knew that the images didn't break any laws so they pursued it and insisted that it couldn't be right. In the end they discovered that the people hired to paste the images onto the billboards didn't

Fig:41



Fig:42



Les Levine Attack God and Rambo poster (fig:41&42)



Fig:43

Oliviero Toscani, Aids pieta (fig:43)

like the images and didn't want to continue putting them up. The organisers and the ICA London then got into a huge legal wrangle between the institute of contemporary arts and the billboard company, and there was a range of billboard companies, but the big one that had most of the sites didn't want to continue but because they were contracted commercially by the ICA London to do that job the billboard company therefore could not refuse to put up the images unless they were told to, either by the Advertising Standards Authority or by the Police. Advertising standards in England didn't complain about the images and in Dublin the ruling that they gave didn't take a position on it. Declan McGonagle would argue that the reaction in London was a result of the social mechanisms that exist there for putting out information. According to Mc Gonagle,

they have never been interested in putting out another view of the troubles in Ireland. Even a billboard company which is part of those mechanisms didn't want that idea to get out there. ie: the social mechanisms of which advertising is one. The idea was, that this is not what advertising does, advertising can exploit women, it can exploit all sorts of ideas about greed, it can exploit violence. There is an image which shows a Rambo poster he's stripped to the waist he's got a rocket launcher, there's a Third World War going behind him, it's a recommendation of a particular type of macho violence. Beside was a Levine image, the Levine image was vandalised about four times and had to be replaced four times and the Rambo poster was fine. (fig:41&42 Quote Mc Gonagle, Doyle,IMMA,1994)

The meaning of Levine's project was not just the individual reactions but it was the mechanisms at work so the fact that in London and Dublin the Campaign came up against these barriers means that it made visible the controlling mechanisms in society and that's the real subject in his work.(Doyle,1994,Interview Mc Gonagle,IMMA)

Benetton's Aids pieta (fig:43) is the most controversial of all their campaigns. It features the death bed scene of Aids activist David Kirby in an emotional setting surrounded by his family. The Kirby family granted the use of the image to

Benetton as they felt it would generate debate around Aids and H.I.V. The ethics of the use of the photograph for selling jumpers was one of the main reasons for controversy. The ads were banned by most of the magazines in Britain and the image was ruled not publishable by the advertising censorship boards of Italy, Spain, the U.K, France and Belgium.

Both Toscani and Levine have revealed the inconsistencies in the use of imagery in the advertising world. Issues around H.I.V are trivialised by not being integrated within a wider cultural context. The shock and the outrage at this image could be argued, has served to sensitise viewers to matters that were previously ignored.(Mayes, 1992, pg 27)

Both the Aids pieta, ban in Europe and the "blame God" paste over on billboards were subject to a kind of "moral censorship". This kind of censorship, with regard to Aids, has previously stifled recognition of a very important subject. It is this censorship which Levine exposes in "Blame God" . The Aids pieta is not the image of an "Aids victim", it's an image that projects the emotion of a family surrounding a man dying of Aids.Both Levine and Toscani have challenged the rules of advertising and as a result have blurred the line between Art and Advertising.

Both Levine and Toscani's work involves provocation and shock. For Levine however, shock is the entree to the idea within the image. Toscani on the other hand uses shock value as a strategy to get brand recognition.



Fig:44

Unconditional Surrender Page 1

Only Answer to Japan



Fig:45

The NY Daily News 1928 **Electrocution, (fig:44)**
 Man being decapitated (fig:45)

CHAPTER 3

SHOCK

WHY BENETTON USE PHOTO-JOURNALISTIC IMAGES

A good news picture in a newspaper will attract eighty per cent of the paper's readership even when it's on an inside page (Evans, 1978, pg1)

One of the main reasons why Benetton ads shock is because they use photos taken by photo-journalists. The power of photographs taken by photojournalists is in the reality of the drama of the moment (fig:44&45), which is not contrived like most advertising photos. The still news photograph isolates a moment of time, it has a connection with the way we remember (fig:45). It is easier for us most of the time, to recall an event or a person or a brand name like Benetton by remembering a single powerful image. In our mind's eye we can concentrate on a single image more easily than a sequence of images. That's another reason for Benetton's impact on the public they only advertise in magazines and billboards. The single image can be rich in meaning because it is a trigger image of all the emotions aroused by the subject. Most editors today would agree that for causing shock and provoking the reader to buy newspapers, there is still enormous power in a single photograph. The news photograph is really powerful and when used larger than life as with the Benetton campaigns it's explosive. (Evans, 1978, pg5).

"The shock is not in the photo or in the impartial use of the advertising, but in seeing the horror of our daily imaginings as in a mirror." (Giusti, 1992 pg11).

Photo-journalism has a rich capacity for symbolism for representing a decade, a war, victory, hope, greed, etc. This is why Toscani often uses news photographs to communicate his idea.

WHO'S SHOCKED AND WHY?

The Benetton strategy is to shock the oldies, and get loads of controversy and censorship which in itself seems really appealing to the younger generation. Surely the older audience would be more cynical and less susceptible to being shocked? However the fundamental difference in understanding between the younger and the older is a sense of propriety and a way of reading not just advertising but mass media in general. Older people (above forty) have a strong sense of the correctness of positioning images in their proper context such as in a T.V news broadcast. To take an image out of context and use it for an ad is viewed as immoral and exploitative. News is for information and ads are for selling and that's that. (McCarthy, 1994, pg 76-78).

Levine's view would corroborate this by stating that in terms of a

narration, something starts at the beginning and ends at the end it takes you through a certain amount of time, and its logic is based on having that structure, it's like the way people who watch T.V who are say older than forty years of age and say certain shows are bad because they're not good plays or good opera or theatre what they don't realise is that in saying that, is, that, it has nothing to do with T.V if you're talking about that because television is a collage medium the more you realise that you can't give any of it too much time, the more media we have in the world the less time we have for any of it except we're only going to get snippets of anything anyway and it's the collage of those snippets even though they don't operate within a kind of narrative of pure logic that creates a new logic". (Les Levine lecture IMMA '94 28th Aug.)

And it's the younger generation who are Media literate therefore they understand the logic of taking something out of context. The attitude of young people is generations apart from their parent's attitudes.

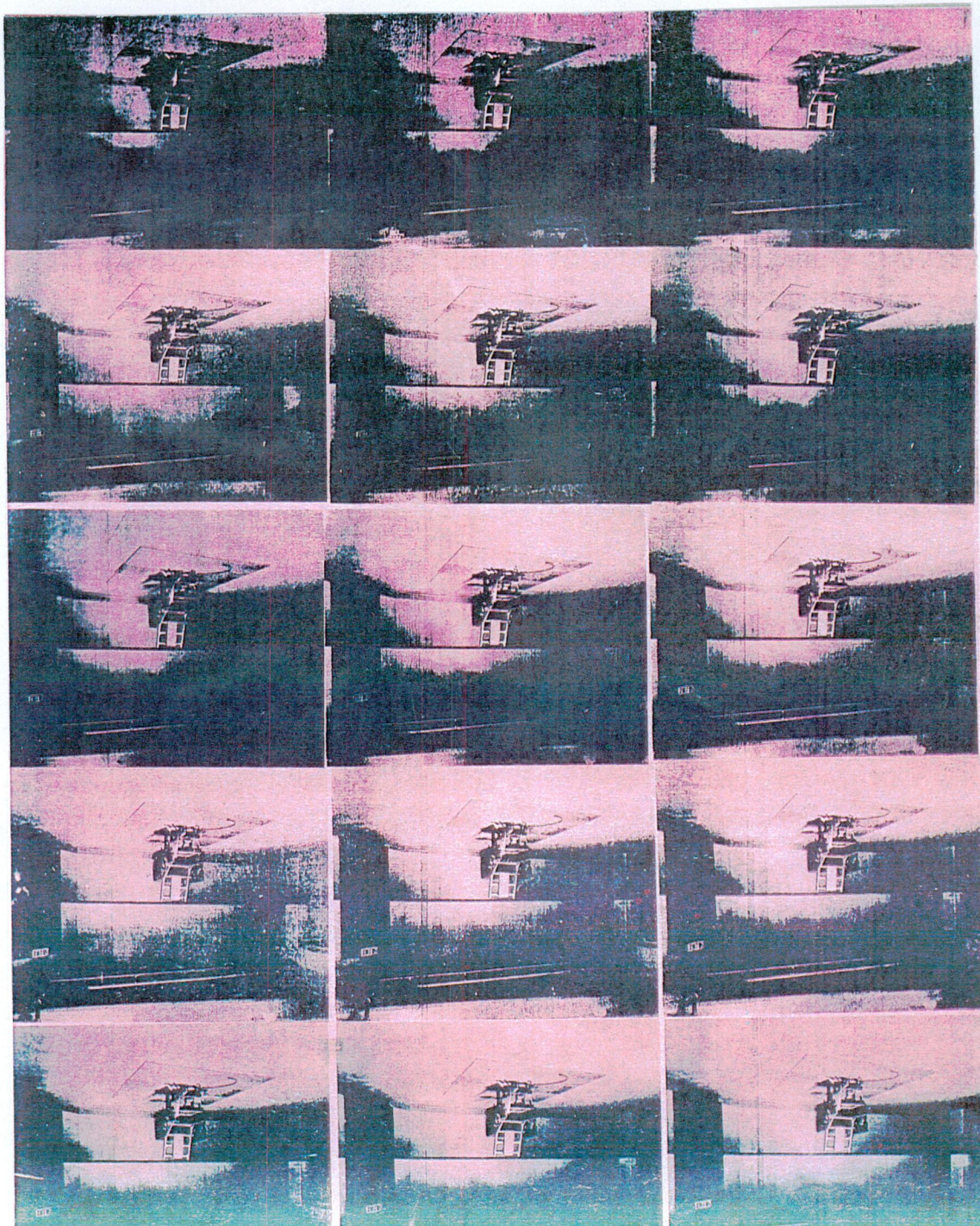


Fig:46



Fig:47

Warhol's, **Electric chair**, (fig:46)

Benetton, Shock of reality, **Electric chair**, (fig:47)

"They're aware that news advertises and that advertising is a form of news" (Mc Carthy,1994, pg76-79)

The MTV, Benetton kids are capable of reading a thirty second T.V clip in a variety of ways,as noise, as information, as signal or as artform. Whether you're shocked or not why you're affected the way you read the image or interpret the images depends on who you are, where you are, on the mood you're in and more importantly whether you're part of the target audience. (Mc Carthy, 1994, Pg76-78)

Toscani's photo-journalistic imagery (fig:47), is in fact very similar to Warhol's choice of imagery (fig:50) in his death and disasters project. Also Warhols Ambulance disaster (fig:48 & Toscani's Murder in Palermo (fig:40) and Warhols Death&Disaster images of the burning car (fig:49) and Toscani's Burning Car image (fig:37)

Warhol, in reaction against the desensitising effects of images of death and violence in the media takes photo-journalistic images out of their original context and repeats the shocking images a dozen times on a single canvas. (fig:46) Warhol believes that in repeating shocking imagery several times on a page you take the sting out of the shock. In effect that's what young people do everyday when they flick on the T.V and pass through imagery unaffected because they're desensitised to it. (Mc Carthy,1994 pg 76-78) Benetton are trying to reach this jaded desensitised audience and have found a way of doing it.

Benetton haven't done anything radically different. What they've done is simply separate actual product from their advertising image giving them the freedom to be controversial with the imagery and to get notoriety. Les Levine corroborates this when he makes an interesting observation that:

Benetton never puts any of their ads near their point



Fig:48

Warhols Ambulance disaster, (fig:48)

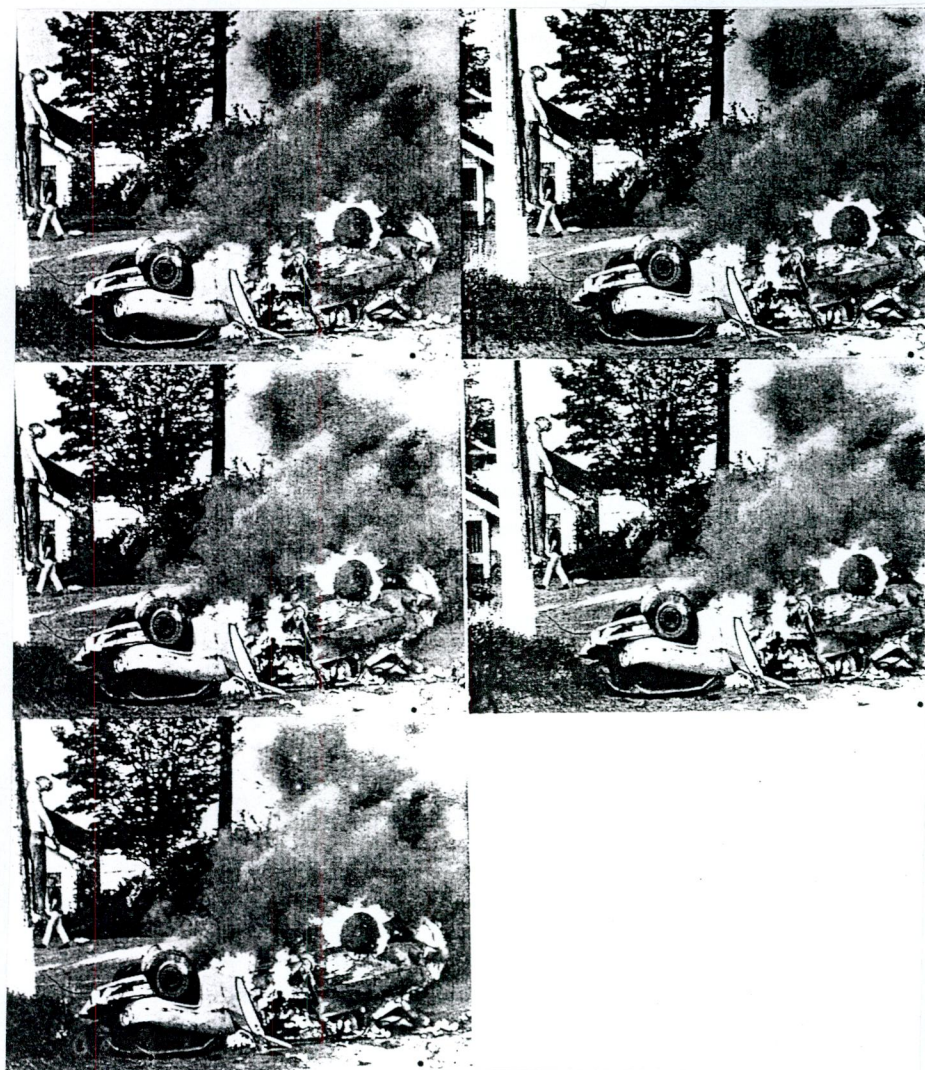


Fig:49

of purchase. That is to say, they only use these ads to be controversial and get editorial space and pretend to be concerned, while simultaneously at their shops they use the same old sexist approach to selling clothing. Benetton have heard that some of their customers have social concerns and so they have exploited their concerns for their own profits. This is no different in Levine's opinion to the rock and roll has been used in T.V commercials to sell to the young or the way semi-naked women have been used to sell automobiles to men in more sexist times. (Doyle,faxed Qs, to Les Levine 1994)

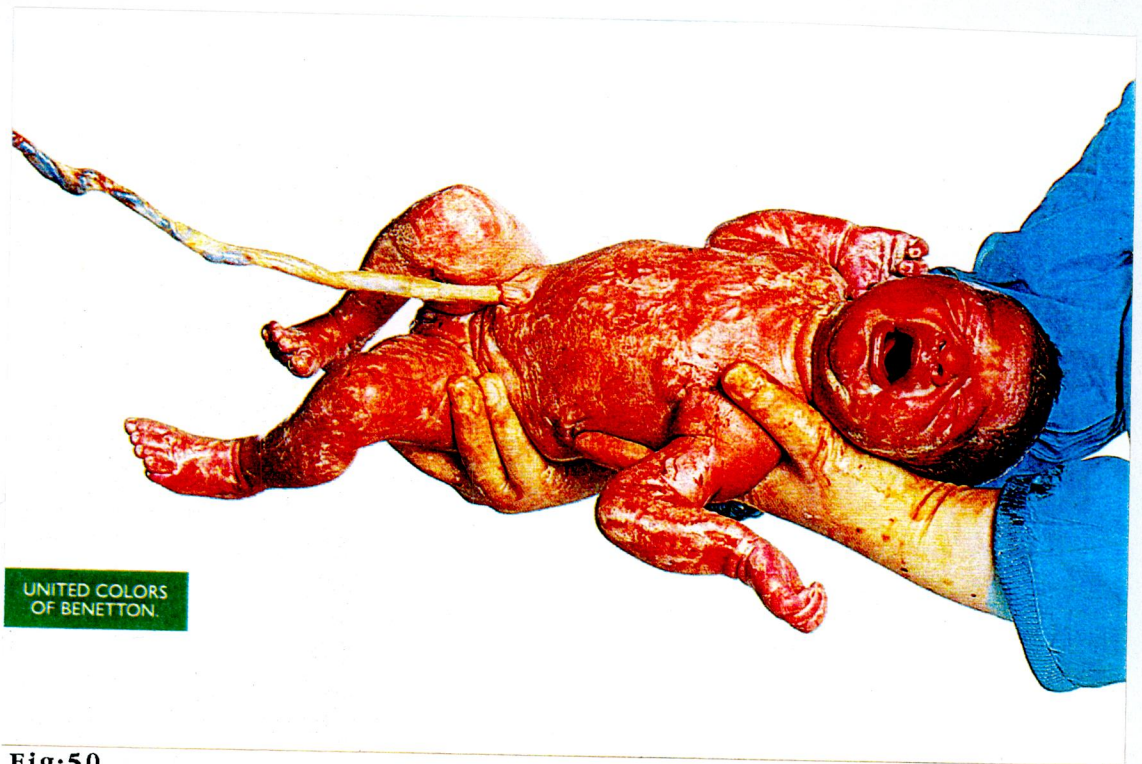


Fig:50

Oliviero Toscani, New born bloody baby, (fig:50)

INCONSISTENCIES IN THE WAY SHOCKING IMAGERY IS USED IN THE MEDIA

Shocking and gruesome imagery has been depicted in art for several thousand years. Artists like Giotto, Bosch and Goya are famous for their violent depictions of death. For example in Giotto's "Massacre of the innocents" children are skewered violently up the anus and kebabled instead of just being killed with a sword. Shocking imagery is definitely more acceptable in painting. No matter how shocking, ethical standards don't seem to apply to these images.

Modern photographers however are lynched at the hint of publishing images that might be controversial, shocking or taboo. The public in Ireland, Britain and many other countries don't, even like the sight of a new born bloody baby (fig:50). Of all the places, Ireland with it's anti-abortion laws, should welcome such images of new life. The Irish media would rather subject us to images of starved to-death cadavers and distressed Ethiopian and Somalian children on their last legs suffering from malnutrition. These are more acceptable billboard images.(Lee, 1991, pg 516)

In photo-journalism there are four areas of sensitivity, violence, intrusions into privacy, sex and public decency. Through the years tolerance has increased and what might have been risqué forty years ago is seen as acceptable everyday viewing today. For example, female belly buttons don't need to be airbrushed out anymore. However decisions over the publication of controversial and shocking imagery still bother photographers and editors today. (Evans,1978, pg38). For example Esquire and Company magazine were one of

many magazines who refused to publish the Aids Pieta (Benetton image) and had to just leave there images blank.

Bare breasts are no big deal now. Yet there was a fair bit of reaction to the H.I.V Brand billboards. There was nothing indecent about these images the message to me was clear and simple these are the avenues through which H.I.V can pass through your body. The media attitude to imagery especially photography is full of ethical holes.

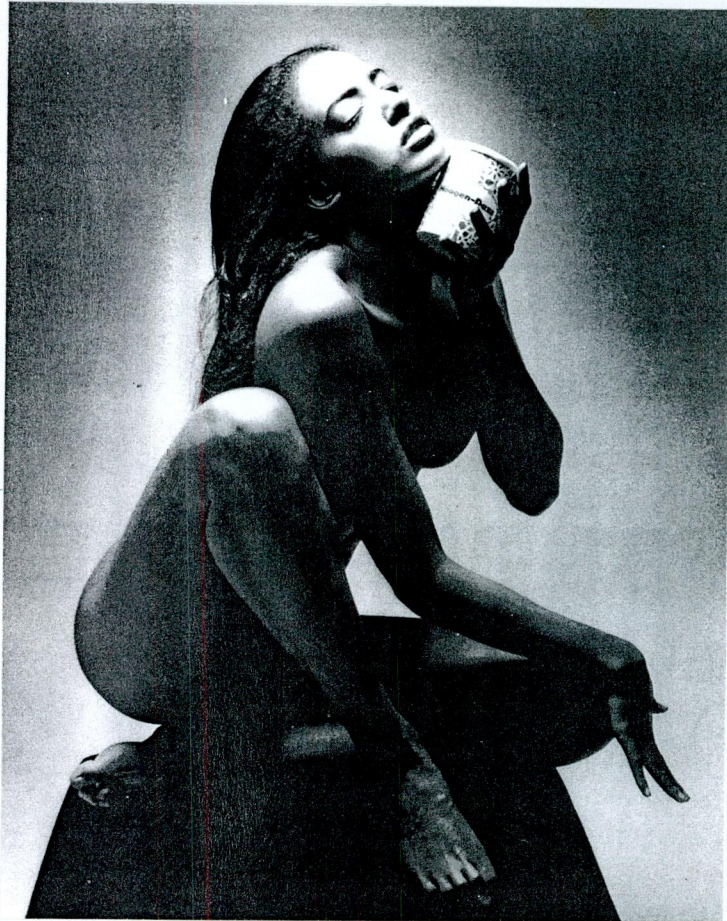


Fig:51



Fig:52

Håagen Dazs, (fig:51)

Helmut Newton,Goodmans stereo equipment, (fig:52)

SHOCK AS A SALES STRATEGY

Advertisers are realising that traditional advertising is becoming too familiar. So advertisers like Benetton have chucked conventional marketing techniques out of the window and are trying to startle the consumers into contemplating their ads.

This new advertising could be called "Shock Advertising", the motive being brand name recognition and not necessarily product distinction. Shock ads are particularly popular with advertisers on a budget. They rely upon publicity created by media reaction to get more brand name recognition.

In 1991 an image of a bare bum wearing a thong bikini for Budget Travel entitled "Get your seat in the sun" was banned. More recently, Budget Travel shocked again in 1995 with their advertisement using religious imagery. The campaign is called 'The immaculate Collection', and uses biblical text to advertise holidays. (O'Connor, 1995, Feb '20)

The new Levis ads released a couple of weeks ago featured a transvestite. Of the two Levis ads RTE banned the ad which barely shows a condom, allowing the second ad which involved a transvestite giving his face a last minute shave in the back of a cab before hitting the town, to be broadcast only after kiddies bedtime. (O'Connor, 1995, Feb 20)

Vanity Fair featured a naked and very pregnant Demi Moore on the front cover.

An image of a dead horse on a knacker's hook was banned, it was an ad for the RSPCA.

Helmut Newton's adverts for Goodmans stereo equipment were banned as offensive (fig:52), the ads featured a couple laying in to each other in the front of a car.

Håagen Dazs uses sultry sweaty females and males eating ice cream with double -entrendes (fig:51). Compared to France though, that's nothing. The French exploit sex and naked bodies where ever possible to sell their products. A Perrier commercial in France features a very scantily clad female caressing a bottle which responds by growing larger and fizzier until a cap is forced off by an exploding jet of water. The parallel with a certain sexual act is obvious. The copyline for this ad is "Perrier, it is wild"(Cullen, 1992, pg14)

To some these images are offensive, but why? Alot of these images are part of everyone's life experience at some time. If these images were in a gallery they'd be treated very differently. Art is generally made for an art audience, something that may be acceptable in a gallery may not be acceptable on a billboard. Everyone knows that art has always exposed taboos, been controversial and shocked. People know that there is a possibility that they may be faced with something controversial when they enter a gallery.

Now, with advertisers like Benetton exposing taboos and controversy divides between public and private moralities are lessening. Advertisers are not the only people using shock as a calculating offensive (Lee,1991,pg 20-21).



Fig:53

Andres Serrano, "piss Christ", (fig:53)

SHOCK USED BY ARTISTS

Andres Serrano has been accused by many critics of jump-starting his career by producing shocking images which have gained him a lot of media attention and notoriety. A failed painter, sculptor and portrait photographer Serrano's claim to fame was his image "piss Christ" (fig:53). "Piss Christ" was a cibachrome photograph of a perspex box filled with bubbly urine into which a crucifix had been immersed. Another shocking image called Heaven and Hell depicts a naked woman hanging from a rope along side a sadistic looking priest. (fig:54)

The Catholic Church was shocked and outraged at such blasphemous work as were general members of the public.

"Piss Christ" however may have been the image to get him notoriety but it was part of a series of photos about bodily fluids. The debate in American Art and beyond was on Aids at the time. Sexual contact and bodily fluids were suddenly dangerous. Serrano is dealing with this in his work. Shock may have been involved but it was meant to take you through shock, it was shock in a productive way. (Lee, 1991, pg16).

Robert Mapplethorpe, is also accused of using shock to aggrandise his reputation (fig:55, Self-portrait). In 1990 Mapplethorpe was charged with obscenity charges for exhibiting sexually explicit photographs of a man's arm up another man's rectum, a man urinating into another man's mouth and a finger inserted into a penis. These images were censored, Art Journal wanted to publish them they had a lot of trouble because nobody would touch the images, two printing companies later they got them published and as a result lost a few subscribers. According to Robert Storr,

These are works of art, and they are not simple, not definitive in their meaning. The discussion of the works as works of art has not taken place - only that the images are supposedly shocking. Now it's time to

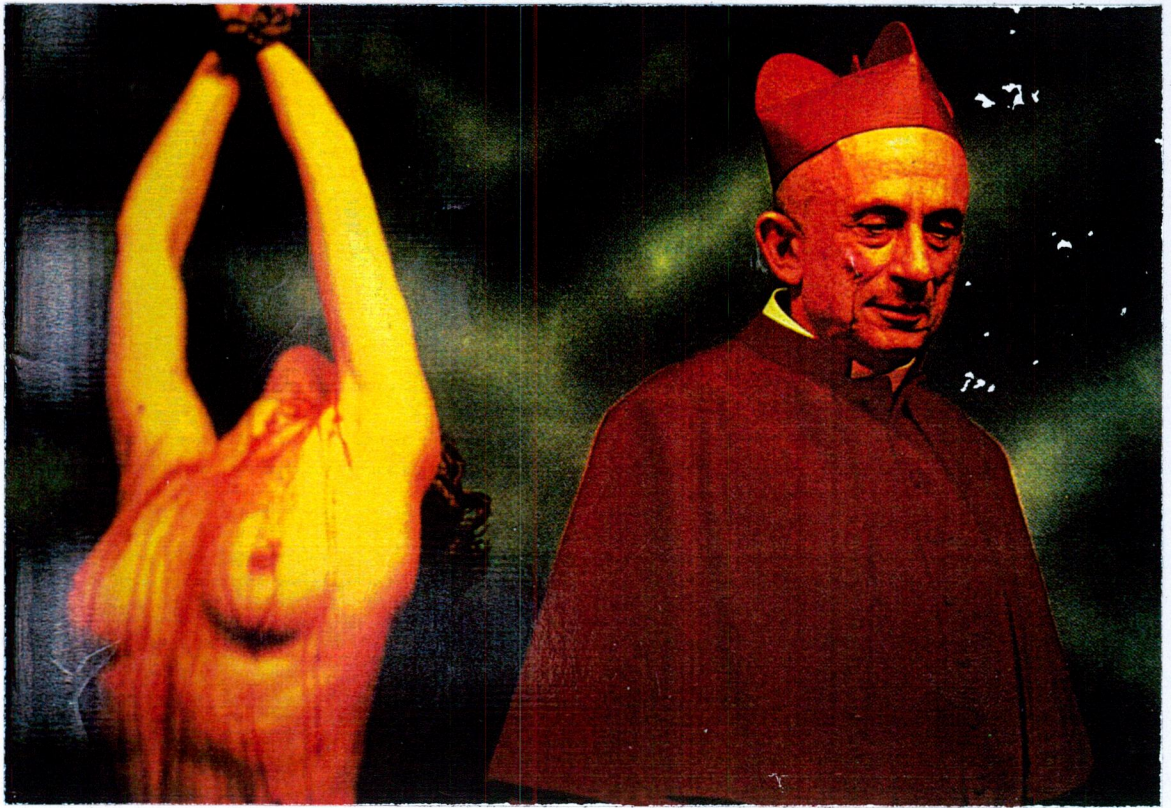


Fig:54

Andres Serrano, **Heaven and Hell**,(fig:54)



Fig:55

Robert Mapplethorpe, **Self-portrait**, (fig:55)

address other issues he says "How does it shock? Who does it shock? Why does it shock?" (quote Robert Storr Art News V11 Mar'92 Pg32).

Mc Gonagle would view Mapplethorpe as a classical artist you have to see his homoerotic imagery which is very shocking, but if you see it beside his exquisite photographs of flowers and what he is exploring in the flowers are the sex of the flowers and then you see the images of Lisa Lyons, The bodybuilder, where the sex becomes ambivalent you have a female but females aren't supposed to be bodybuilders. What Mapplethorpe is dealing with are actually quite important issues in society in people's minds how we value and how we enclassify people and things in our society. The danger is that if you look at single works or groups of works in isolation and for any artist that can be a real disaster. That proved to be such for Serrano and Mapplethorpe. (Doyle, Interview with McGonagle, 1994, IMMA).

Joel Peter Witkin has become a very controversial figure in the photographic world. Never before has a photographer's work shocked more. Witkin uses cadavers (fig:56), dead bodies, dogs and mutilated animals in conjunction with living obese, dwarfs, hermaphrodites and deformed people (fig:57) to produce images that break many social taboos. Witkin takes death in his stride, although many have criticised him for mocking the dead, for placing a women's face on the body of a dog, the vertically bisected halves of a face kissing each other. In his defence Witkin says that:

I don't exploit. I'm very humbled by working with human remains of any kind, but the subject matter must finally be transcended. If people stop at that literalism they don't understand the possibilities of visual metaphor. (Coleman, 1991, pg27)

A lot of the themes of Witkin's work are in fact taken from well known paintings. Paintings are experienced as unreal, photographs are seen as real. Witkin gets at our anxieties



Fig:56

about death and the handling of dead bodies in his photos, that is what causes controversy.

Witkin has been avant-garde in his approach to subject matter dealing with taboos that photography seldom touch. Witkin is interested in questioning and examining the boundaries of shock. Witkin has learned that taboos are learnt and taught.

depending on the country and the culture in which the child grows up. what is taboo for one is acceptable for another. Some cultures will not touch dead but accept death without fear. Others revere the dead body and are terrified of death. Some children play naked together others are taught never to look at each others bodies, cows are sacred in one cultures and eaten in another.(Murray,1986,pg12).

It's these boundaries which Benetton are also interested in questioning and crossing and that's why the imagery is so controversial. Witkin is open to challenging taboos of our society just as Toscani is with his ad campaigns. The result is, both the subject matter of both offends accepted morals. Everyone knows that artist's interpretations of issues or subject matter often clash with the general public's. What is obvious though, from the controversy created by Mapplethorpe, Serrano Witkin and Benetton is that the public still view photographs as threatening and real. What these artists are doing is paving the way for future photographers and advertisers to produce imagery dealing with subject matter previously "unacceptable".(Murray, 1986, pg12)



Fig:57

Joel Peter Witkin, (fig:57)

CONCLUSION

What criteria today validates work as art? Does it have to be contained in a museum or such like familiar or conventionally accepted venue to be accredited as art, or can it be somewhere else?

Both Toscani and Les Levine claim that the billboard is just as appropriate a place or a medium through which art can be displayed powerfully for a more immediate contact with the public. That basically is what Toscani and Levine's work is about. The motives are different but the impact is the same. The billboard is a powerful tool for communication because of its contact with the public as a universal medium. Billboards are everywhere, their messages permeate the subconscious.

Both Toscani's and Levine's work challenges the conventional ideas of bland unthinking advertising forcing the onlooker to think beyond the images portrayed, in search of a meaning that is not immediately obvious.

They both throw up the inconsistencies and contradictions in the use of imagery and challenge the viewers moral preconceptions and accepted ways of looking at things. Their images expose ideas in a shocking way with maximum impact in public places.

Benetton has shown how shock can be exploited for use in advertising with arresting images, and Benetton's work has even been exhibited and accepted as art. Conversely, Les Levine's work has been transposed from a conventional art venue into an advertising venue via the billboard.

Artists in the past have shocked to gain attention in the gallery, in a traditional art setting. In this instance Les Levine is doing the same thing but in different surroundings to communicate an idea (with a powerful impact eg: "Blame God")

and to get people to think about it.

Benetton, in producing new startling images and shock have echoed the work of artists who have done the same in the past, for example Manet's Olympia, contrary to the accepted norms of advertising. They force people to look at things afresh in a brutal unsettling way, and in that way they have echoed the work of the artists. That is the connection and the conclusion!

Bibliography

Articles:

- BADGER, Gerry, "Serious Photography Matters", Creative Camera Volume 4 June 1990
pg 41-3
- BEAL, Graham, But is it art ? Apollo, London, Volume 132, Nov.1990, pg 317-21
- CARLSON, Lance, Enlarging the Photographys impact, Artweek ,Volume 20 April 29,
1989, pg 12
- CARTY, Ciaran, Undermining advertising, Sunday Tribune, 31 August, 1986
- COHRS, Timothy, Joel-Peter-Witkin, Arts Magazine, Volume 61 Oct, 1986 pg 109
- COLEMAN, A.d, Schlock horror, British Journal of Photography, Volume 139 Sept.26,
1991, pg 27
- COLOMBO, Furio, Benetton Camoaign, Aperture, no.132, summer 1993 pg 74-5
- CULLEN, Michael, Marketing Volume 3 no.2, Feb.1992 pg 14
- CEMBLEST, Robin, School for Scandle, Art news, Volume 92, Mar.1993 pg 33
- DI-MATTEO, Gabriele, The Notorious Campaign of Luciano Benetton. Print Volume 47
Nov/Dec 1993 pg 52-5
- DURDEN, Mark, The Word. Creative Camera no 321, April/May 1993 pg 34-7
- EWEN, Stuart, The public Eye. Artforum Volume 29 Jan 1991 pg 27-8
- FRANK, Patrick, Ten billboards, Highway 93, eight m9les south of of Boulder, Colo,
installation. New Art Examiner Volume 18 Feb.1991 pg 46
- FRARE Therese, Untitled: Aids patient. British Journal of Photography Volume 139,
Sept. 5 1991 pg 16-17
- FUSCO, Coco, Andres Serrano shoots the klan. High Performance, Volume 14 fall 1991
pg 40-5
- GILBERT, Rolfe, Jeremy, from reading to unreading. Art Magazine, Volume 63 April 1989
pg 25-8
- GIOVANNI Janice, Style and Travel, Sunday Times, (magazine section), 4 Dec 1994
- GIUSTI, Mario, Benetton's News Latest Challenge , Il Manifesto 16/2/1992*
- HALL, Stuart, The meaning of new Times in Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques ed. New

Times The changing Face of Politics in the 1990s (London :verso press,1990) pg 117.

HENDERSON Sally, Landu, Billboard Art. Industrial Design, Volume 31 Sept/Oct 1984, pg 54-5

HENRY, Gerrit, Ted Greenwald Gallery N.Y, exhibit ArtNews, Volume 84 Mar.1985, pg 147

HOROVITZ, Bruce, Shock ads give grim Message, Evening Press, Tues 24 Mar 1992

JOHSTONE, Marks, Helmut Newton: the power of suggestion. Artweek Volume 16 Jan. 26 1985, pg1

JONES, Bill, Born Again: seeing the end of Photography, Arts Magazine Volume 64 Oct 1989 pg 72-77

KANDEL Susan, Fahey/Klein, Gallery, Los Angeles, exhibit. Art Magazine, Volume Nov.1989 pg 111-12

KARRFALT, Waynes, Ashai evening news, June 28, 1994, Volume 1008*

LEE, David, Joel-Peterson-Witkin, Art- review, London, Volume 43, Oct.1991 pg 516-17.

LEE, David, BBC Billboard project, Arts Review, Volume 44, June 1992, pg 234-5

LEE, David, Photography (British documentary Photography)

Arts Review Volume 38 , May 9, 1986, pg 242-3

LEE, David, The Shock of the Few, British Journal of Photography, Volume 138 Dec. 12 1991, pg 20-1

LEE, David, Urine Test, British Journal of Photography Volume 138 Nov. 14 1991, pg 16

LEITES, Edmund, (Ted Greenwald Gallery N.Y exhibit, Art in America Volume 73 Mar. 1985 pg 159-60

LEVINE Les High Performance Volume 12 winter 1989 pg 19

LEVINE, Les Artform Oct, 1982 pg 100-106

LIPPARD, Lucy, Andres Serrano: the spirit and the letter, Art in America Volume 78 April 1990, pg 238-45

LIPPARD, Lucy, R Silence till Death. High Performance Volume.14, pg 28-31, Fall'1991

LUCERNE, Mai 36, Mass Media Projects & Advertising, 1988, pg 4

MAC,Mahon,Emer In Dublin oct.12 1992 pg 15*

MARKS, Laura v,"Moving targets" Afterimage Volume 15 April 1988 pg 3

MAYES,Steve,No single meaning , British Journal of Photography,vol.139 Feb'13
pg 27

MAYES,Steve,Indecent Exposures, British Journal of Photography, vol 138, Sept,5,
1991, pg 16-17

MC CARTHY,Gerry,In Dublin Volume 19 no.5 pg 76 Mar 2 1994

MC CULLAGH, David, Evening Press,Tues 24 Mar. 1992*

MEDCALF, Laura,Marketing 21/03/94*

MILES,JC, the troubles, A review of Les Levines exhibition 'Blame God' at the
Institute of contemporary Art pg 20

MITCHEL,W-J Thomas, The Ethics of form in the photographic essay After
image, Volume 16 Jan. 1989 pg 8-13

MURRAY- Joan, Overstepping traditional bounds, Artweek, Volume 17 Jan. 25
1986 pg 12

O'CONNOR,Alison Designed to shock. Evening Press, February 20 1995

O'LEARY Noreen,Benetton true colours Adweek , Aug.24 , 1992

OSTROW,Saul,Everson Museum of Art Syracuse N.Y installation. Arts Magazine,
Volume 65 Jan.1991

PERKINS,Williams Eric,'The Distorted Colors of Benetton' Print Volume 46
July/Aug 1992 pg 12-15

POPHAM, Peter ,Cunning Stunts The independent (magazine Section)no.255
31st July, 1993, pg 24-7

ROTH,Nancy, Art Photographs transformed into Bilboards in Minnneapoli After
image, oct,1985 pg 5

ROSEN ,Jeff, Benetton and the New Cultural relativism, New Art Examiner
Volume 21 Nov. 1993 pg 18-26

SERRELL, A llison, Bare ads (sex and shock appeal still make nudity an advertising
attention grabber. Art Direction Volume 39 May 1987 pg 50-3

SISCHY, Ingrid, Adverising Taboos: Talking to Luciano Bennetton and Oliviero
Toscani, Interview April 1992 pg 69 *

SQUIERS, Carol, Violence at Benetton, Artforum,May 1992 pg 218-19*

STEINBERG, Janice, 'When artists advertise', High Performance, Volume 11 Fall 1988 pg42-45

STEVENS, Michel, Change the world, Buy a sweater, Chicago Tribune, Dec 11 1992, v.33

VANCE-Caroles, The war on culture, Art in America Volume 77 Sept.1989 pg 39

WAGNER, Van, Judy k. Collischan Sound art Arts Magazine Volume 59 sept. 1984 pg 19

WIGHT, Robin, Campaign 25/03/1994*

Benetton, Spring/Summer 1992 Advertising Campaign copy 2

'Toscani al Muro" 4 Dec 1994, Fax sent to Profile Plus ,Benetton PR Ireland 8/06/94 *

Authority forces removal of Benetton baby poster British Journal of Photography Volume.139 Sept.12 1991, pg5*

Photograph's title stirs boycott campaign NewArt-Examiner Volume 16 June 1989 pg 11*

Controversy prompts billboards removal in Chicago. New Art Examiner Volume.19 Nov.1991 pg12*

Star Final, 24/03/94 *(German HIV Buttocks Banned)*

Note

I have placed an asterix in places where Bibliographical information is incomplete this is because information provided by Profile Plus ,Benetton PR was incomplete

Books:

- BARTHES, Roland. Mythologies, New York, Hilland Wang, 1972
- BECKER, Carol, The subversive Imagination, artists, Society and Social responsibility. London,&New York, Routedge, 1994. pg 186-205.
- BERGER, John, Ways of seeing, Great Britain, British Broadcasting Corp. and Penguin Books Ltd, 1972.
- DUNLOP, Ian. The Shock of the New. New York, American Heritage Press, Mc Graw- Hill, 1972
- EVANS, Harold, Pictures on a Page, Photo-journalism,graphic&picture editing,Heinemann Ltd,London, 1978
- GREENWALD, Ted, Public Mind:Les Levine,Everson Museum of Art, 1969-90, Syracuse Colour graphic Ltd., 1990.
- HENDERSON, &LANDAU, Billboard Art, London, Angus & Robert Publishers, 1981
- HUGHES, Robert, The shock of the new, NewYork ,Alfred, A Knopf, 1981.
- HOPPS, Walter, Andy Warhol, Death and Disasters, The Menil Collection, Houston Fine Art Press,1987
- LIPPARD, Lucy, Pop Art, NewYork: Federick A. Praeger, 1966
- LIPPARD, Lucy,Trojan Horses, Activist Art and Power in Art After Modernism rethinking Representation, NewYork, The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984.
- LIPPARD,Lucy Get the Message? A Decade of art for social change, NewYork,EP Dutton, 1984
- MC LUHAN, Marshall, The Mechanical Bride NewYork, Vanguard, 1951
- MC LUHAN, Marshall,Understanding Media, NewYork, Mc GrawHill,1964
- MC QUISTON, Liz, Graphic Agitation social and political Graphics since the Sixties, London, Phaidon Press Ltd, 1992.
- PELFREY, Robert, Art and Mass Media, NewYork, Harper&Row, 1985.
- SCHUDSON,Michel, Advertising the uneasy Persuasion, NewYork Basic Books, 1984

SONTAG, Susan, On Photography NewYork, Dell, 1973.

WILLIAMSON, Judith. Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and meaning in Advertising, London,
Marion Boyars, 1979.

Interviews/Lectures

BYRNE, Gay, Late, Late Show Interview, with Oliviero Toscani 21st Sept 1993

DOYLE, Elena, Interview with Declan Mc Gonaglr, Irish Musuem of Modern Art
16th Dec. 1994

DOYLE, Elena, Interview with Martin Mc Cabe ,N.C.A.D 1994 Dec 9th

DOYLE, Elena, Faxed questions to Les.Levine IMMA, 16th Dec 1994

FEELEN, Gary, taped lecture Les Levine, ,IMMA, 28th Aug. 1994

SUPERCHANNEL Masters of Beauty 21st Nov 1994 (Discussion about
Benetton)

WITHOUTWALLS, (Benetton documentary) Feb.1994

MC GONAGLE,Declan, extracts from a conversation between Les Levine and
Declan Mc Gonagle, ICA, London, Sept 1985,

Press release, The Douglas Hyde Gallery 1986.Blame God,(book) Published by the
Institute of contemporary Arts with assistance from the Artangle trust and the
orchard Gallery Derry.

