

Doc on journey of Warhol art on HBO

By Seth Shire

In the new documentary, "Brillo Box 3c Off," filmmaker Lisanne Skyler has created a fascinating, playful, energetic, funny and highly enjoyable, multi-faceted, personal documentary about pop art in New York City in the 60s, her childhood, her parents and her family's relationship to art, one piece of art in particular.

Ever since humans applied paint to cave walls some 40,000 years ago, people have debated the question, "What is art?" "Brillo Box 3c Off" addresses this question, as well as the ongoing controversy over who, or what, determines what art is worth.

Skyler's story revolves around pop artist Andy Warhol's practice of re-creating the design of cardboard Brillo boxes, in wood, and calling them art. In one of the film's many archival in-



A new documentary on HBO explores pop art and one piece in particular.

terview clips, Warhol is asked why he doesn't simply create art that is original instead of copying others' works. Warhol, nonchalantly, and with easy candor, replies that it's just easier to do. Warhol, notorious for his artistic appropriation, is probably best known for his paintings of Campbell's Soup cans. To this end, one critic, upon attending one of Warhol's shows

quipped, "Is this an art gallery or Gristedes' warehouse?"

Skyler's parents purchased one of Warhol's Brillo boxes for one thousand dollars in 1969. Her father had the good sense to request that Warhol sign it. Warhol obliged, in red crayon. The family kept their Brillo box for a while, but Skyler's father, Martin, eventually sold it in order to purchase other art that he

liked. Skyler traces the journey of her family's Brillo box as it travelled from owner to owner over the years, eventually selling, at auction, for over three million dollars.

Skyler and editors Jeanna French and Geof Bartz have seamlessly blended archival footage of Warhol, Skyler's family snapshots, animation, re-creations and modern day interviews with high profile experts in the world of contemporary art. The film's most interesting sections are interviews Skyler conducted with her parents, Martin and Rita, each of whom has different feelings about the decision to sell their "Who knew it would ever be so valuable?" Brillo box.

"Brillo Box 3c Off" will have its premiere on August 7 on HBO. In addition, the documentary will be available on HBO on Demand, HBO GO, HBO NOW and affiliated portals.