Article

Artistic and Psychoanalytic Processes: Morgan, Warhol, Herrmann, and Freud

Fernanda Sofio*

University of São Paulo, Institute of Psychology. São Paulo, SP, Brazil

Abstract: Can an artistic project be treated as analogous to a psychoanalytic interpretation? To explore this question, this article considers Morgan's series of dance photographs, later appropriated by Andy Warhol as silkscreen prints, as a single "case study." The analysis of this pair of artistic processes develops into a discussion of their similarities with a psychoanalytic interpretive process, thus serving as a "testing ground" to consider how analytic interpretation may prove relevant to artists and art critics. This differs from the more common idea of incorporating psychoanalytic theories into the analysis of art (among other simplistic and methodologically incoherent applications of one of these fields to the other). The article draws upon the theoretical contributions of Fabio Herrmann. João Frayze-Pereira's ideas of the intrinsic relationship between Art and Psychoanalysis are implied.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, interpretation, art, photography, Brazilian psychoanalysis.

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Can an artistic process be considered *interpretative,* in the psychoanalytic sense of the term? By "interpretation," I refer not to the words an analyst uses to communicate an idea to a patient, but the process of investigation of the psyche of the human world. This is a process that may be used with a patient, or to interpret our relation to the world we live in more broadly. The psychoanalytic process is one by which human meanings are revealed. The actual words used by the psychoanalyst, which the Brazilian author Fabio Herrmann playfully describe as *interpretative sentences*, are certainly an aspect of the interpretative process; however, they are the result of, not the engine, that moves that process. I have chosen to clarify this point early on, because it is a common source of confusion. In this paper, in order to explore the possibilities of this analogy between artistic processes and psychoanalytic interpretation, I will discuss an example from the arts, which I consider as a "case study," because it functions as the "testing ground" for my hypothesis that artistic and psychoanalytic processes may, at times, be analogous. Of course, the result of an artistic process — that is, the artwork itself — does not "speak" like a patient in an office. However, neither do the aspects of our world investigated psychoanalytically. A work of art does gather history, and a record of that history. These aspects provide the necessary clues for tackling this "case" in an interpretative manner; they are its way of "speaking."

The "case study" in question consists of two crucial elements: first, Barbara Morgan's series of photographs of the American dancer Martha Graham and her dance group, produced between 1935 and 1940; and second, the silkscreen prints that Andy Warhol created in 1986 using those same photographs, known as the *Martha Graham Series*. To help the reader visualize this, Figure 1 shows one famous photograph from Morgan's series, which is later transformed by Warhol in Figure 2.

Figure 1. Barbara and Willard Morgan, photographs and documents
Source: Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

* Corresponding address: fernanda.sofio@usp.br

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Figure 2. Art and Image © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./Licensed by ARS

It is worth noting now that, while Morgan's series investigates the meanings implied in Graham's dances, Warhol's prints distance themselves from the original photographer. Notably, Warhol's title does not mention Morgan, but instead Graham, the photographed dancer, as if he could somehow "delete" the photographic act and blur any distinction between the dancer and her image. This represents a step in the iconization of Graham. It is worth remembering the paradoxical effect of Warhol's silkscreens in the 1960s: through extreme repetition, he created something novel, a technique that revolutionized 20th-century art. The *Martha Graham Series*, from 1986, came decades after this supposed revolution, thus representing a return to the techniques he had pioneered in the 1960s. It is a repetition of a repetition, a detail that is also worth considering. In this analysis, I will both individually consider the two artists' creative processes — as described by Morgan and Warhol themselves in interviews, as well as by art critics — and the results of those processes (the finished works); however, these two moments should not be confused for one another.

The two artists' works, viewed in conjunction, push us to consider the similarities between psychoanalytic interpretation understood as a process and, to some degree, as a product. This "case study" allows us to explore one way that psychoanalytic interpretation may prove relevant to the arts. What we are not doing is applying psychoanalytic theories to creative works; much to the contrary, we hope to use examples taken from art to think about the artistic process and inform how we carry out psychoanalytic interpretations. In this paper, I will first clarify my understanding of psychoanalytic interpretation and how it differs from other common understandings of what Psychoanalysis[1] is. After that, I will delve into Morgan and Warhol's artistic processes, pondering their parallels to the work of a psychoanalyst who, similarly to these artists, seeks to find (and produce) meaning in the human world.[2]

Psychoanalytic interpretation

It is important to establish upfront what Psychoanalysis is *not*. Many, both inside and outside the field, view it as a collection of finalized or "readymade"[3] theories created by Freud, Klein, Bion, Winnicott, and Lacan, among others – as if their theories constituted some sort of interpretative outline or even a dogma. I view this as self-contradictory. After all, the reader may consult any dictionary and will quickly notice that the word *theory* is not defined by inalterable facts.

In this study, I approach Psychoanalysis from a different perspective. Specifically, I see it as a *method,* as proposed by the Brazilian psychoanalyst Fabio Herrmann (1979/2011), based on his understanding of Freud (1924/2011)[4]. I treat individual psychoanalyses, therefore, as processes. This understanding emphasizes what happens in an analytical relationship with patients and/or aspects of the world we live in[5]. While it is certainly true that interpretative processes may develop into theories[6] or hypotheses that help us to understand specific situations, such hypotheses should not be taken as facts. They are provisional, and always at risk of being

1 Like Herrmann, I have chosen to capitalize Psychoanalysis when I refer to the prospective science or discipline; I have chosen to use the lowercase version of the term, psychoanalysis/es, to refer to examples of psychoanalytic endeavors or case studies.

2 It is worth nothing that my training as a researcher in the psychoanalytic interpretation of art draws heavily on the work of João Frayze-Pereira (2004, 2007, and 2009), particularly his notion of *implied psychoanalysis*. I have also been influenced by my personal relationship with Frayze-Pereira, who, over a span of ten years, advised my PhD research and supervised my post-doctorate. Frayze-Pereira is an expert in the study of Art and Psychoanalysis. I am additionally influenced by the work of Fabio Herrmann. When asking myself "*What is Psychoanalysis?"*, I turn to his definitions of *psychoanalytic interpretation* and *psychoanalytic method* (1979/2001, and 2001). Conceiving of Psychoanalysis as an artistic science, Herrmann advocates for an interwoven relationship between Art and Psychoanalysis. His ideas have pushed me to look at method and artistic process not as incompatible ideas, but ones to be worked with concomitantly. All in all, it is worth stressing the degree to which Frayze-Pereira and Herrmann's ways of thinking have become integrated into my writing.

3 I use quotation marks to emphasize my belief that this is an incorrect approach. The term, borrowed from the art world, is being used ironically. Just as Duchamp used readymade objects and forced the viewer to question whether his work may still be art, psychoanalytic jargon, repeated to the point where it becomes nearly meaningless, can be considered like an undetected readymade object, thoughtlessly "applied" to any whichever situation.

4 Fabio Herrmann (1944-2006) was a Brazilian psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, author, and thinker.

5 Psychoanalyses are not limited to interpretative processes developed with patients (people). Freud made this clear. While a considerable amount of Freud's work is dedicated to case studies with patients, over half of his studies investigate specific objects, such as religion, daily life, literary texts, and works of art.

6 Or *proto-theories*, according to Fabio Herrmann's term (2001, p. 80).

lost or, in the course of the analytic process itself, being replaced. This is a central feature of psychoanalytic processes, as investigated by the Multiple Fields Theory (how Herrmann's system of thought became known over time). It follows that we talk about *interpretive processes*, rather than a *system of correspondence*, for example.

In this sense, the psychoanalytic method should be distinguished from any result, in and of itself. It must be considered as the process through which results are obtained. Psychoanalysis, taken as a method, is a live and ongoing process – unlike the words that an analyst may iterate, whether dictated to their peers or written down in papers and in books[7]. Fabio Herrmann (2001), ever irruptive, uses the term *interpretative sentences* to describe the very speech uttered by an analyst in session (the product of the interpretive process). In his ironic way, Hermann's term creates an inexplicit parallel between an analyst's phraseology and a death sentence[8].

This way of understanding psychoanalytic interpretation is not without precedent. Notably, in 1924, Freud defined Psychoanalysis as clinical *investigation* and, simultaneously, as *getting rid of ailment* (cure) through an intangible process. That said, a prolific writer, Freud did not limit himself to a single definition of Psychoanalysis. Approaching the question of interpretation from many different angles, Freud offered varying notions of what it could be. The definition I use is not his only theory. This may very well be why so many psychoanalysts, scholars, and even lay people mistakenly understand interpretation, an ongoing process, as one that is already completed – that is to say, they reduce it to the spoken words of an analyst and the theories of acclaimed psychoanalytic authors.

Herrmann specifically followed this line of Freudian theory, which argues that interpretation is an "unusual conjunction" that "served simultaneously the purposes of investigating and of getting rid of the ailment" (Freud, 1924/1961, p. 194)[9]. He devoted over thirty years, ten books, and hundreds of articles to articulating the very nature of psychoanalytic interpretation, or psychoanalytic method: what it is, how it works, and how it *cures*[10] of the human psyche.[11] While Herrmann often discussed the issue of interpretation during this period in his career, his core conceptualization did not change or become inconsistent in later works. In fact, his concepts developed and opened up *like the branches of a tree*, a metaphor first used by his intellectual heir, Leda Herrmann (2004/2007, pp. 11-24). While new perspectives are examined in several of his books, and later articles do reexamine ideas and offer new examples, his works are never mutually incompatible – something that cannot be said, for instance, about Freud.

In an attempt to summarize Herrmann's ideas on the interpretative process, I quote from "Da interpretação na Teoria dos Campos: condições e consequências" ["On Interpretation according to the Multiple Fields Theory: Conditions and Consequences"] (1994), which he published as a book chapter in 1995. The text, by Herrmann and Leda[12], addresses the greatest difficulties faced by an analyst when describing the interpretive process. It asks: *how does interpretation unveil unconscious meanings?* It is a question that begs greater exploration from psychoanalytic scholars. And yet, seeing as interpretation is based in unobservable – indeed, nconscious – material, we must also ask: how can we know if an interpretation is "correct"?

Over the course of Herrmann's career, he develops what he termed *methodological concepts* that, while necessarily intangible and empirically unobservable, are logical in the philosophical sense. Although the results of the interpretive process may often be clinically verified, the interpretive process through which those results were obtained is not directly observable. What these concepts do, then, when working together, is assist in imagining how a psychoanalytic process operates. In the words of Herrmann and Leda (1994/1995):

> Interpretation is the core of our practice; and yet, as with any core or essence, a sort of slippage or escape characterizes psychoanalytic interpretation. On the one hand, we are always tempted to do something other than interpret. On the other, the haziest part of our practice is determining the exact point where an interpretation has occurred: what words, reticence, even silence may have triggered it. The Multiple Fields Theory has sought to determine the methodological workings of interpretation, moving beyond the simple, yet precarious, approach that confuses the interpretative act with an explanatory sentence, which the analyst might interpolate at will in the patient's discourse. . . . Synthesizing the contributions of the Multiple Fields Theory

7 To complicate matters, it is common for psychoanalysts to refer to their products as *interpretations*. The point here is for us to remember that this is a *minor* understanding of the term.

8 Marilsa Taffarel (2005), for example, uses Herrmann to explore the importance of interpretative sentences in sustaining a patient's representations when, for example, there is an unsettling *field rupture*. This is a central moment in the interpretative process, in which the patient's old representations are shattered and new ones are yet to be established, thus producing a kind of vortex of representations – that is, a scrambling of that person's way of seeing him or herself in the world. In 2003, however, as Herrmann discussed clinical research that he would later publish in 2005, he warned that such safety may be misleading. In the case of *standard clinical practice*, while psychoanalysts may feel relatively comfortable relying on established theories, they are in fact acting like shipwrecked sailors: in an attempt to find something to hold on to, they grasp at anchors, and eventually sink to the bottom of the sea.

9 In her doctoral dissertation, Taffarel (2005) explores this Freudian text and his definition of *interpretation*.

10 Herrmann draws from Heidegger, who uses the word *cure* in the sense of preoccupation or care, from German *die sorge*. (Herrmann, 2001, p. 177)

11 Unpublished texts by Herrmann are still being made available. Currently, I am translating and organizing a collection of Herrmann's essential works, to be published by State University of New York (SUNY) Press in 2021. The book will contain an anthology of his articles, many unpublished even in Portuguese.

12 I have chosen to refer to Leda Herrmann by her first name, in order to distinguish her from her husband, for whom I use just "Herrmann."

> to interpretation, however, has proven itself more challenging than it might initially appear. . . In the end, the most meaningful [challenge]: for us, the Multiple Fields Theory is, first and foremost, a form of thinking, and only secondarily a collection of concepts that articulate that form. (pp. 30-31)

Certainly, interpretation reveals *truths*, but only in relation to the process that brought them into being. This way of understanding psychoanalytic interpretation and how it functions push me to consider a possible analogy between the psychoanalytic process and some works of art. After all, both artistic and psychoanalytic processes investigate the human world. If this analogy proves apt, we may infer that some artistic collaborations are more comparable to the analytical process than others. I use Barbara Morgan's dance photographs, later appropriated by Warhol, as a testing ground for this hypothesis. Looking at the 1941 book *Martha Graham: Sixteen Dances in Photographs*, which was later revised, expanded, and republished in 1980, and then turned into silkscreens by Andy Warhol in 1986, I investigate whether or not, and to what extent, these artistic processes are similar to the psychoanalytic process (and vice versa, seeing as art is much older than Psychoanalysis).

Poetics

Over the course of five years, Barbara Morgan photographed Martha Graham and her dance group with the goal of producing visual narratives. She developed a meticulous methodology for these photographic essays — one that was centered, as she explains in a 1978 interview, on unveiling the "essence" of each dance. (Morgan, 1978, p. 45) I intend to analyze whether or not this *essence* resembles an *interpretation* created alongside the dancers, which led to the production of photographic sequences representative of each dance.

Shortly before the publication of the book's second edition, Morgan spoke on two different occasions – in 1978, and then around 1980 – to the nature of her collaboration with Graham and the dance group, as well as to how she obtained her photographic results. The first of these statements, a 1978 interview, is available as a 91-page transcript at the Columbia Center for Oral History, at Columbia University. In accordance with the wishes of Morgan and her family, the transcript is not on circulation. Originally, this transcript was meant to be included in the *Bennington Summer School of the Dance Project*, which would result in a book on the history of modern and postmodern American dance. The project, however, was never completed[13]. Morgan's second interview about the Graham project – more brief, and also more commercial, though on a limited scale – is included in the documentary film *Barbara Morgan: Everything is Dancing*. It was produced by Checkerboard Foundation, a small independent production company focused primarily on American art.

When comparing the two interviews, it becomes clear that Morgan repeats many phrases. Indeed, some are nearly identical. Since it is improbable that the editors of the film and the transcribers of the interview were in contact with each another – after all, there is little or no overlap in terms of the people involved in these projects, other than Morgan herself – we may use this symmetry to justify treating the documents as if they were primary sources that reproduce the artist's actual words[14].

The explanations that Morgan provides in these interviews, in addition to an analysis of her photographs, reveal the meticulousness of the methodology she employed in producing concise representations of Graham's dances. In essence, Morgan attended rehearsals and dance performances, following her intuitions as she tested out some photographs here and there. Both Graham's autobiography (1991) and Morgan's interview (1978) indicate that her presence resulted in her unintentionally contributing to Graham's choreographic process.

The second step in Morgan's process emerged during the first. As Morgan watched Graham choreograph and she began to take more pictures, she had an idea: a sense of the core meanings that she would seek to capture in the photographic sequences corresponding to each dance. Morgan explains how, before a mental image took shape, she would hold firm as she watched the dancer, the group, and the choreography being created. In her words, she "wouldn't do anything," instead she would "let the memories float around in my [her] mind" (Morgan, 1978, p. 52). It appears that Morgan allowed the formation of a clearer idea in her own mind, to *happen* to her. "I would not be intellectual," she says; a condensed image would form in her mind, which she could then capture photographically. Morgan explains that she found inspiration in movements that are repeated in each choreography. The repetitions indicated to her what the audience would take with them from the show. Necessarily, however, this was a result of her perspective as a *receptor*[15] of the dance. This, she realized, was the *core* of each dance.

13 Dance historian and professor Lynn Garafola shared this information with me at Columbia University in 2016.

14 Evidence of the transcript's authenticity may also be seen in the inclusion of small details, such as "makes tea." This authenticity is further corroborated by the fact that the documentary was filmed not too long after the initial interview, and that this transcript would have been available for consultation only at the university.

15 According to *Reception Theory*, every work of art requires that a viewer interact with it, whether to interrogate it or explain it. His or her interpretation will not be the final one, but it will be a possible one. *Communication* between the artwork and the viewer is fundamental so that it is not "forgotten" (like Kafka's Odrakek), as well as such that the artwork may be *concretized* (*konkretisiert*), in the sense given by the Constance School. Although the Constance School referred to literary works, the idea that it proposes is easily translatable to the visual arts. In the words of Wolfgang Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach": "[It is the] convergence of text and reader [that] brings the literary work into existence. . ." (p. 279).

Once she had an image in mind, Morgan would return to the photography studio to work with the dancers as models, manifesting her mental pictures as a series of photographs. She played around with lighting and scenery until she found the desired effect for bringing forth the image that she formed through her contact with the dance. Of course, this stage was experimental, just like the previous ones in which she observed and discovered the "essence" of each dance. Morgan did not know exactly how her mental images would turn out in the studio, or if they could even be captured through photography. In practice, something quite different could emerge. Indeed, the final results – that is, the printed photographs – held their own surprises.

For her work in the studio, Morgan thoroughly researched the technical possibilities for each image; more specifically, the different connotations of the direction and intensity of light. According to Brett Knappe (2008, pp. 42-44), an arts scholar who specializes in Barbara Morgan, her work is so unique, in part, because of its use of light to create allegorical meaning. Morgan never described her work as interpretive, neither in the long interview transcript, nor in the short documentary film. However, she often referred to her photographs as "visual poetry" or "my poems" (Knappe, 2008; Morgan, 1978; Patnaik, 1999). Indeed, her emotional involvement in this dance project is, to me, quite palpable.

Black-and-white photography was a similarly well thought-out choice. The idea, according to Morgan, was to create a more durable product; after all, she sought to use images as a form of preserving Graham's ephemeral art. Color photography could not achieve this in the same way: "Color isn't archival: it changes and gets dull and out of balance" (Morgan, 1978, p. 46). She goes on to explain that, had new technology from 1978 been available in the 1930s, she would have certainly used color (1978, p. 48). Of course, the results would have been completely different, and we'd only be able to analyze them had this approach been taken.

That said, Morgan suggests another reason for choosing black and white. Playing with lights and darks, she notes, allowed her to emphasize what she calls several times the "essence" of each dance (as opposed to smaller details, such as clothing and scenery). In short, it seems evident to me, both in Morgan's explanations and the photographs themselves (the product of her process), that she is creating interpretative images of dance, at the same time that she is preserving dance history, that is, her interpreted version of it.

In stark contrast, Andy Warhol's artistic process is characterized by the speed with which he was able to *iconize* his subjects – transforming themes, oftentimes famous people, into images stripped of their substance. In his *Martha Graham Series*, the subject ceases to be dance as a narrative, studied via images appropriated from Barbara Morgan, but rather becomes Martha Graham, the dancer herself, who is treated as an icon. Moreover, since this series was produced long after Warhol shook up the art world in the 1960s – long after the incorporation of industrial features in art and high culture had been exhausted – this work was no longer considered innovative.

As in his earlier silkscreens from the 1960s, in *Martha Graham Series,* Warhol pursues the paradoxical objective of mass production. Paradoxical because, while Warhol was indeed an artist – and not just any artist, but one of the most prestigious American artists of the 20th century – he also hoped that his art would become *boring* (Foster, 2012, p. 110). He wanted it to be easily reproducible, too. In his words: "I don't want it to be essentially the same — I want it to be exactly the same. Because the more you look at the same exact thing, the more the meaning goes away, and the better and emptier you feel" (Foster, 2012, p. 110). And, in a similar vein: "I like boring things." (Foster, 2012, p. 110).

Foster is citing from a famous interview that appeared in ARTnews, which was divided in two parts. The first part was published in November 1963 and the second in February 1964. In 2018, a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago, Jennifer Sichel published a revised transcript of that interview, after coming across the original cassette tapes. She explains in the article that the 1963 and 1964 publications had many transcription errors. Per her revised, 15-page transcription, Warhol (1963/2018) elaborated: . . . . everybody should be a machine. . . . I think it would be so great if more people took up silkscreens so that, in turn, no one would know whether my picture was mine or somebody else['s] (pp. 4, 13).

The simple silkscreen technique, in and of itself, achieved Warhol's goal of infusing painting with industrial and repetitive elements. For, while silkscreen printing is a manual process, it is also one for image reproduction. Indeed, this was so undeniably his intention that, between 1962 and 1984, instead of referring to his work environment as a studio, he called it a *factory.*

The *Martha Graham Series* was produced shortly before Warhol's death. At this point in his career, although he continued to produce silkscreens when commissioned, it had been a long time since he had pursued new artistic goals. We will see that the *Martha Graham Series* occupies an entirely different place in his body of work: neither a commission, nor part of his artistic revolution. Not by chance, the *Martha Graham Series* received little attention from critics and art historians; it has been deemed a minor work, rarely mentioned in criticism and academic texts. In fact, the general opinion is that it was produced in a hurry and that it lacks context within the artist's larger body of work.

There is an interesting comparison to be made between Morgan and Warhol's poetics. Whereas Morgan employed photography – an artistic medium that has often been defined by scholars like Benjamin (1935/1969) as one of repetition – to find and/or produce meaning, Warhol took a traditional artistic medium, painting, and fused it

with industry-standard repetition so as to virtualize an image through duplication. His process creates a sense of the uncanny or *strange double effect*, in Foster's words, since the image no longer resembles reality.

We also note that, while Morgan sought out and recreated the meanings implied in each dance, Warhol erased them. Morgan uses the photographic process to capture each dance's core and transmit it through a series of images. Warhol, in contrast, combines painting – which is not traditionally associated with mechanical reproduction – with the mechanical and automatic technique of silkscreen printing. In doing so, he uses this artistic medium as a way of problematizing the sameness of contemporary life. This repetition of images creates characters that are more like icons than full-fledged humans, though at the same time they are representations of people (or their ghosts). To consider this aspect in Warhol's work and its effect on the viewer, we again turn to Foster (2012):

> This multiplicity [of duplicated images] makes for the Warholian paradox not only of images that are both affective and affectless, but also of viewers who feel neither composed, as in the ideal of most modern aesthetics (the subject made whole in contemplation), nor dissolved, as in the effect of some popular culture (the subject given over the the schizo intensities of the spectacle). (p. 120)

Whereas Morgan imbues each dance with meaning, created in the relationship she formed with the dances and the performers, Warhol is led instead to the paradox of emptiness in life and art.

The photographs

As we have seen, Barbara Morgan's *Martha Graham: Sixteen Dances in Photographs* was transformed by Warhol into a series of iconized images. What is the meaning behind this deliberate transformation?

I will explore this question by analyzing a selection of Morgan's photographs and Warhol's silkscreens. For financial concerns, and also in consideration of the article's length, I did not reproduce Morgan's complete series. There is a certain irony to this, seeing as Warhol's work contributes to the "commoditization" of Graham's image, at the expense of Morgan's original intent of using photography to reproduce the narratives conveyed by each dance in the 1930s. Regardless, I encourage the reader to search Barbara Morgan's book and experience these visual narratives in full. The photos that I do include here are used only to illustrate how Warhol has modified Morgan's images and her intent.

We will start by revisiting the images reproduced earlier in this article. Figure 1 is the most iconic from Morgan's series, representative of the dance *Letter to the World*, which debuted in 1940. Figure 2 is Warhol's silkscreen recreation of this photograph.

Morgan uses light and scenery for dramatic and narrative effect. Warhol's silkscreen, on the other hand, is flat, without depth. Its effect may be considered uncanny, and it begs the question: is this icon a real person, an image, or both? While Graham is certainly an image in Morgan's photograph, Warhol's truly opens up this debate. His meta-representation[16] appears to transform Graham into pure image, stripping her of her humanity. Additionally, taken out of its original context, the image ceases to represent a moment from a dance, as it was dependent on the other photographs in Morgan's series for that meaning to come through. As such, Warhol's *Martha Graham Series* is an indiscriminate and decontextualized assemblage of scenes from different dances.

Furthermore, in contrast to Morgan's experimentation with light in her black-and-white rendering, Warhol's colors come across as artificial, almost fluorescent. To create this image, he edited and simplified the original photograph before employing his silkscreen technique. He zooms in, for instance, on the dancer, and disregards the dramatic effects achieved through lighting and scenery that were present in Morgan's original work. His electric tones and thin lines resemble a comic strip, thus transforming Graham into a commoditized object.

Perhaps the most meaningful comparison is that Morgan did not even include this image in her 1941 book, as Brett Knappe (2008) notes. I believe this is because it did not fit into her understanding of the dance's narrative – after all, this is way before her photograph became iconized first by its viewers, and ultimately by Warhol's rendering. The narrative was the reality, not the icon. However, once it had been iconized, the photograph was included in the 1980 edition of Morgan's book. This new edition was nearly identical to the 1941 book, but with a new written statement from Graham that expressed greater awareness of both hers and Morgan's success as artists, as well as the inclusion of photographs from *Letter to the World*. In other words, between the publication of these two versions, Graham underwent a process of iconization, and she embraced it, at least to some extent. In 1986, Warhol realizes that her iconization was underway, and he accentuates this process.

Other transformations from the series are also worth considering. Figure 3 displays two of Morgan's photographs corresponding to the *Satyric Festival Song* dance, which premiered in 1932. Figure 4 shows Warhol's silkscreen renderings of these images.

Here, too, Warhol's substantial edits to the original photographs are evident. In the first silkscreen (on the left), he doubled a single image of the dancer; in the second (on the right), he joined together two different images of her. In both cases, the result is similar: reconstructed as

16 Because *representation* is a psychoanalytic concept, I refer to photographs as meta-representations: visual images of *representations* in the artistic sense (Sofio, in pressa).

a pair of figures, a double of herself, Graham becomes less human and more symbolic (or iconic). The shape of the silkscreens, a square, emphasizes this effect. As expected, Warhol does little to show that these images derive from dances. Even as Morgan's name appears in a footer, we must ask whether or not this was Warhol's intention. Indeed, as I visited these works in American university libraries, it was unclear if the inclusion of her name in the cataloguing was the library's decision or the artist's own request. It begs the question: who catalogued these works? The factual answer was unavailable, but I would not be surprised if it was the library.

Figure 3. Barbara and Willard Morgan, photographs and documents
Source: Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Figure 4. Art and Image
Source: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./ Licensed by ARS.

Rendered as an icon, Graham appears without context or history. Flat and painted in artificial colors, she is once again represented as a commodity. This is in contradiction with Morgan's original proposition: Graham's embodiment of the dance is no longer the focus. An industrial stamp of sorts, Warhol's silkscreen ceases to be an image about dance.

According to Foster (2012), beyond its industrial nature, Warhol's repetition gives his work a melancholic character:

> These operations [Andy Warhol's] suggest an obsessive fixation on a lost object in melancholy, or compulsive repetition of a traumatic event, more than a patient release from this object or that event in mourning. . . . [R]epetition in Warhol not only reproduces traumatic moments; often enough it

> produces them as well. . . . In these repetitions, then, several contradictory effects can occur at the same time: a warding off of traumatic significance and an opening it, a defending against traumatic effect and a producing of it. (pp. 110-113)

This is why Warhol so often chose "models" who evoked a sense of melancholy. In fact, by choosing to work with Graham's image, he was adhering to this tendency – especially if we consider who Graham was in the 1960s; she describes in her biography that, despite her acquired fame, she felt quite unglamorous at the time. (Graham, 1991) As her body transformed with age, she struggled to reinvent herself. (Over time, she would come to the realization that, while her body no longer moved in the same way, she could still successfully apply her dance research to the bodies of younger dancers. This realization motivated Graham to return to the dance world, where she would remain for another nineteen years. During this period, she mainly dedicated herself to researching how to choreograph for other dancers, growing fascinated with the diverse possibilities of working with people's bodies (Graham, 1991).)

Another melancholic element in Warhol's work has to do with the fact that dance itself is, perhaps, the least profitable and most undervalued form of art. Behind Martha Graham's glory and glamour — aspects that we tend to associate with her, and which she liked – there was a life of many sacrifices. The hardest, it seems, was the end of a love story, as Mark Franko (2012) documents. At her lowest point, so disgusted by the aging process and the passage of time, she became alcoholic for a period of time (until reinventing herself as a choreographer in 1972).

The last of Morgan's photographs that I will explore in this article represents the *Lamentation* dance, which premiered in 1930 (Figure 5). Warhol also transformed this image into a silkscreen for his *Martha Graham Series* (Figure 6):

Figure 5. Barbara and Willard Morgan, photographs and documents, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

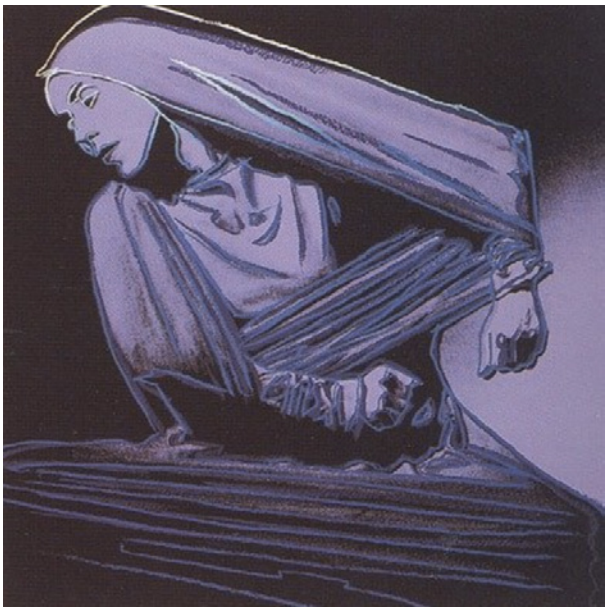

Figure 6. Art and Image © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./Licensed by ARS

Once again, Warhol's cropping and zooming is evident. His silkscreen print is a portrait of the world we live in, or rather, the one that he lived in: in the Warholian world, people and things either have no substance or they have lost it, and so they persist instead as surfaces and commercial products. Morgan's documentary and interpretive impulses, as well as her visual narratives, disappear completely in Warhol's work.

Historical context and legacy

Before becoming a photographer, Barbara Morgan was a painter. At the time, she understood photography as "stealing" from nature (Morgan, 1978, p. 15) – an activity that she believed required little creativity and had less artistic value. Eventually, she took up photography at the suggestion of both her husband and the famous photographer Edward Weston, who she met by chance in a studio where she worked. Initially, she produced photomontages and light drawings,[17] techniques that she could accept as creative because they made artistic use of the photographic medium. Over time, however, Morgan became interested in photography "without makeup," as she said. Setting aside these earlier techniques (even as she experimented with them occasionally), she delved into more realistic photography, eventually developing the intuitive methodology that she used in her dance photography. This is, I believe, the exact moment in which she transformed her photographic process into an

17 Light drawing is a photographic technique that involves moving a light source while taking a long exposure photograph. The ability to "draw" results from moving the camera itself during the exposure to light sources. This is a technique that has been practiced both in artistic and scientific endeavors since the 1880s. (For more information, please see the Wikipedia article on Light Painting.)

interpretive activity (as opposed to her previous desire to artificially produce "artistic" photographs).

This transformation took place, at least partly, because Morgan felt a historical necessity, a mission of sorts. In the second half of the 1930s, as New York immersed in gloominess and the U.S. faced the imminent prospect of entering World War II, Morgan was convinced of the importance of her dance project. She worked on the Graham images free of charge for five years, as she felt it was her job to help the American public through those dark times. Art was her way of contributing: she preserved (her interpretation of) the work of many artists, but mostly dancers, since their work is ephemeral by nature. She was especially fascinated by Martha Graham.

Morgan explains that it didn't take long for her to understand that, during those times of social and economic turmoil, Graham's dances were able to give Americans a sense of identity. Graham's strength was a source of inspiration. For Morgan, this justified her self-declared mission of preserving dance in the form of images; it was an investment in the future.

The project represented a meeting of two strong women. The photographer can be described as an *amateur*, but only in the sense of Alfred Stieglitz (1899/1980), who defined the term as someone who works for love:

> Let me here call attention to one of the most universally popular mistakes that have to do with photography – that of classing supposedly excellent work as professional, and using the term amateur to convey the idea of immature productions and to excuse atrociously poor photographs. As a matter of fact nearly all the greatest work is being, and has always been done, by those who are following photography for the love of it, and not merely for financial reasons. As the name implies, an amateur is one who works for love; and viewed in this light the incorrectness of the popular classification is readily apparent. (p. 117)

According to Martha Hill, who was present at the 1978 interview with Morgan: "We were above money in those days! We had none and we were above it!" (Morgan, p. 63, 1978). In other words, Morgan felt historically driven to complete her work.[18] By the time of the publication of the book's second edition, both Morgan's photographs and Graham herself had become much more popular than they had been in the 1930s, especially in New York. Yet, as we have seen, today these photographs are appreciated much more for their iconic potential than for their interpretations of narratives in dance. In the end, the thing that has most carried Graham's dances from generation to generation is their permanence in the repertoire of the Martha Graham Company and the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance, both in New York.[19]

Just like Warhol's greater body of work, the legacy of *Martha Graham Series* is characterized by its paradoxes. Its images did become iconic, thus contributing to a trend that Warhol himself had diagnosed. Even more ironic, though, is the fact that images from the series circulate mainly in dance circles. The very people who love dance are the ones who most contribute to its iconization – a process that, on the one hand, threatens the enduring history of narratives and, on the other hand, allows artists to reap financial benefit, which then becomes a part of the artwork's transformed history. Regarding this second point, while this series means very little in the scheme of Warhol's career, it has been a great asset for Graham and her company. Once deified, Graham's dances – while they ran the risk of losing their history and context – were able to provide her company with the means for building itself up. To a certain extent, this is the realization of Warhol's paradoxical artistic project. He, of course, understood this: that iconization would bring Graham (and her dances) great benefits, even as, to some extent, it emptied, flattened, and deprived her of her humanity and history.[20]

In this sense, Warhol was described by critics not only as an artist, but as a "visionary entrepreneur" (Green & Unruh, 2010, p. 11). His fortune was estimated at US$ 228 million (Wrbican, 2010, p. 117)! That said, even as he worked mostly by commission in the 1980s, setting aside his revolutionary ambitions of the 1960s, some say that he was drawn to Morgan's images for a different reason. Having attended a show by Graham's company, he felt drawn to the work of his fellow Pittsburgh native, and decided to help her financially. As we have seen, in his images, Warhol iconizes Graham – but he does so ironically, knowing how much her art touched him. Yes, Warhol's world

18 At this moment, I will refrain from undertaking a feminist argument, although it is true that Morgan and Hill were almost always considered "amateurs" in the other sense of the word: their art was not taken seriously. For women, photography was seen as a mere pastime. It took decades for this concept to change, and there is still a long way to go. The fact that their photography was not understood as art contributed to it being undervalued. At the same time, though, it allowed women to truly dedicate themselves to their own craft, precisely because their work would not be treated as work.

19 Of course, these groups bear little resemblance to the ones that existed at the time of the book's publication. Founded in 1926, Graham's company had a very limited structure that, over the following decades, developed into a more substantial school and company.

20 An ambitious exhibition held at the Whitney Museum in New York, from November 12, 2018-March 31, 2019, had the goal to examine Warhol's work in its entirety. One of the articles in the exhibition catalogue, titled "The factory of self," discusses precisely the aspect of replication and loss of meaning in Warhol's portraiture. In the article, the curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Art Institute of Chicago, Hendrik Folkerts, writes: ". . . . we are unlikely to find an artist who wanted greater control of public production and distribution of his self-image. . . . Replicated ad infinitum, the semblance of Warhol lost meaning. . . . Paradoxically, there is hardly an artist whose life has affected the reading and arguably the creation of his art to such a dramatic extent as Warhol's." It is in this context that Folkerts discusses: "the appeal of the photo booth as a mechanism for standardizing and demystifying the process of portraiture. . . .".

is empty and meaningless, as we can perceive in his art; yet he was moved in some way or another by the dancer's expressivity and bodily narratives. Warhol passed away shortly thereafter, in February 1987.

So does it count as interpretation?

As I understand it, Morgan flexes her interpretative muscles at several moments of her artistic process. Notably, both Graham (1991) and Morgan (1978) highlight how they were changed by their shared experience. Unintentionally, even the dancer's choreographic process was influenced by the photographer. In this respect, Morgan may be considered to be like an analyst, following and interfering in a process, but also so deeply engaged in it that she can no longer accurately distinguish the nature of her role or her own influence.

Additionally, the notion that Morgan was waiting for an image to form for her in her mind, which could capture the "essence" of each dance, very much resembles what happens in a *field rupture* – the core of the psychoanalytic interpretation process. Herrmann described *field rupture* as the instance that defines interpretation and which, at the same time, results from it. It is a "rupture" in the network of meanings that are in effect in any human communication, which Herrmann (2001) considered "the form itself of all legitimate knowledge." (p. 59) Finally, Morgan's process contains an "interpretative sentence." She asks Graham if her dances' repetitive motions were included so that audience members could take these choreographic phrases for themselves, as a sort of substrate of the dance as a whole; Graham says yes. While the field rupture is the most fundamental aspect of the process, the interpretive sentence explains what has been done, both for the dancer and for the photographer herself, who has arrived at this explanation.

In comparison, Warhol's diagnoses the "commoditization" of things in the world and the extent to which people may become commodities. His work leaves no room for an ephemeral art such as dance: the dancer is rendered an icon. It is an interpretation of the world we live in, not a transformation of Graham's dances into a work of art. This process, just as much as Morgan's, seems to produce a field rupture. It is in this sense that I find myself able to compare the artistic process to Psychoanalysis – or, even better, psychoanalytic processes to artistic ones.

All in all, I have shown that an artistic transformation, such as the incorporation of Morgan's dance photographs into Warhol's silkscreens, can be thought of as analogous to psychoanalytic interpretation, particularly as defined by Fabio Herrmann. Morgan's photographic series was treated as analogous to an interpretive process, in which meaning is derived through close collaboration. Warhol's project, on the other hand, is paradoxical: his art deals with repetition as a theme and takes it to the extreme, thus creating something new. In the 1960s, this was viewed as a revolutionary breakthrough in the arts.

Treated as a single "case study," these two works allowed us to contemplate the similarities between artistic and interpretive psychoanalytic processes. However, this is just one example of how psychoanalytic interpretation may add to how we think about art, beyond the more common notion of applying psychoanalytical theories to artworks. Indeed, here, an understanding of psychoanalysis as an interpretative process has proven itself useful outside of "pure" or exclusively psychoanalytic spheres.

Because this comparison between the psychoanalytic interpretive process and the artistic one is not exclusive to the example involving Morgan and Warhol, we might very briefly consider another case: the collaboration between the anthropologist and historian Lilia Schwarcz and the artist Adriana Varejão, which rendered the book *Pérola imperfeita* [Imperfect Pearl] (2014). Both were transformed by the aesthetic experience of working together, and something new was created, which neither of them had been previously aware of. Neither Schwarcz nor Varejão are psychoanalysts; far from it. However, the internal transformations brought about by their mutual creative process suggests that we may be able to think of their collaboration as analogous to an interpretative psychoanalytic process. In fact, when I asked Schwarcz if this idea resonated with her experience, she confirmed my hypothesis. This case certainly deserves a more detailed analysis. For now, however, what interests me is the assumption that there do seem to be situations in which an artistic process may resemble a psychoanalytic process, perhaps to the point where it could be mistaken for one. Furthermore, it may be that interpretative processes can be found in several disciplines across the humanities, social sciences, and arts. Fabio Herrmann's contributions, and their implications for the very meaning of interpretation in psychoanalysis, have a crucial, if not revolutionary, role in this discussion.

Processo artístico e processo psicanalítico: pensando com Morgan, Warhol, Herrmann e Freud

Resumo: Há processos artísticos análogos a interpretações psicanalíticas? Para pensar esta questão, tomo séries fotográficas sobre dança produzidas por Barbara Morgan, depois apropriadas por Andy Warhol em serigrafias, e as considero como um único "caso clínico". A análise desses processos artísticos, tomados em conjunto, dispara uma discussão sobre suas semelhanças com o processo interpretativo de uma psicanálise, instigando o pensamento sobre como e por que a disciplina psicanalítica é relevante para o campo das artes, para a crítica de arte e possivelmente também para as ciências sociais e humanas. Esta ideia é muito

diferente daquela mais comum que se tem de "aplicar" as teorias psicanalíticas conhecidas ao estudo de obras de arte (entre outras relações que são feitas entre as duas áreas, mas que me parecem simplistas e metodologicamente incompatíveis). Apontam para esta articulação as conceituações dos psicanalistas brasileiros Fabio Herrmann e João Frayze-Pereira, entre outros autores.

Palavras-chave: psicanálise, interpretação, arte, fotografia, psicanálise brasileira.

Processus artistiques et psychanalytiques : Morgan, Warhol, Herrmann et Freud

Résumé : Les processus artistiques peuvent-ils être analogues à une interprétation psychanalytique ? Pour réfléchir à cette question, je considère les séries photographiques de danse produites par Barbara Morgan, puis appropriées para Andy Warhol dans ses sérigraphies, et je les considère comme un seul « cas clinique. » L'analyse de cet ensemble de processus artistiques se développe dans une discussion sur leurs similarités avec le processus interprétatif de la Psychanalyse, en incitant à réfléchir comme et pourquoi la discipline psychanalytique est pertinente pour le domaine artistique, pour la critique d'art, et possiblement aussi pour les sciences sociales et humaines. Cette idée est très différente de celle plus courante « d'appliquer » des théories psychanalytiques connues à l'étude des œuvres d'art (entre autres relations simplistes et méthodologiquement incohérentes qui sont faites entre les deux domaines). Les contributions conceptuelles des psychanalystes brésiliens Fabio Herrmann et João Frayze-Pereira, bien comme d'autres auteures, soulignent cette articulation.

Mots-clés : psychanalyse, interprétation, art, photographie, psychanalyse brésilienne.

Proceso artístico y proceso psicoanalítico: Morgan, Warhol, Herrmann y Freud

Resumen: ¿Existen procesos artísticos análogos a la interpretación psicoanalítica? Para pensar sobre esta cuestión, considero las series fotográficas de danza producidas por Barbara Morgan, y después apropiadas como serigrafías por Andy Warhol, y las tomo como un "caso clínico" único. El análisis de ese par de procesos artísticos plantea una discusión sobre las semejanzas con el proceso interpretativo del Psicoanálisis, que instiga a desarrollar sobre cómo y porqué la disciplina psicoanalítica es relevante para el campo artístico, para la crítica de arte y posiblemente para las ciencias sociales y humanas. Esta idea es muy diferente de la idea más común de "aplicar" teorías psicoanalíticas conocidas a obras de arte (entre otras relaciones simplistas y metodológicamente incompatibles que se formulan frecuentemente entre las dos áreas). Se utilizan en esta investigación conceptualizaciones de los psicoanalistas brasileros Fabio Herrmann y João Frayze-Pereira, además de otros autores.

Palabras clave: psicoanálisis, interpretación, arte, fotografía, psicoanálisis brasilero.

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