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CAN YOU GUESS WHICH LOGO THIS IS?

BY CHLOE DEWBERRY | FRI. OCTOBER 17, 2014 | 6:30 PM | NOW VIEWING

Even if you beat all 16 levels of that logo quiz app, you might not catch what's going on in Alfred Steiner's paintings right away. Take his strange juxtaposition of a fish, cigarette butt, banana, breast, and shot pourer—on closer inspection, the Playboy bunny. Or, the peach, pickle, vulva, and flaccid penis (Bass Ale). The paintings examine the underlying contradictions behind trademarks—and make you uncomfortably aware of how they influence you.

"I chose a lot of the marks because they had some sort of broader cultural or political impact depending on how you thought about them," Steiner, a former copyright and intellectual property lawyer, told us at the opening of his new exhibit, *Likelihood of Confusion*, at the Joshua Liner Gallery. Steiner remade the Cleveland Indians logo, already a politically charged symbol, as a greedy mouth prepared to munch on a croissant, for instance. The Target bullseye, meanwhile, he imagined as a "Do Not Enter" sign covered with a golf ball and a red Aricept pill, which treats Alzheimer's symptoms such as confusion. How likely are we to be confused by corporate logos? The exhibit begs the question.

Of all the recognizable images, some of the most fascinating are those of high-end fashion houses. In *Dyslexia*, the YSL logo appears as a snake, a martini glass, and a garden hoe. In *Vulva*, the Louis Vuitton logo is reassembled in the form of a hockey stick, a roller blade, a pencil, and a screw—items Steiner associates with working-class culture. "I thought it was interesting that there's that blue-collar, sort of hockey aspect... [paired with] a high-end brand."

Steiner's exhibit also debuted *Louis Vuitton Don*, a reflective-ink screenprint that features Kanye West taking down a paparazzo behind a sea of Louis Vuitton logos. The best part? Kanye's image is only visible behind the logos when the viewer takes a flash photo of the image.

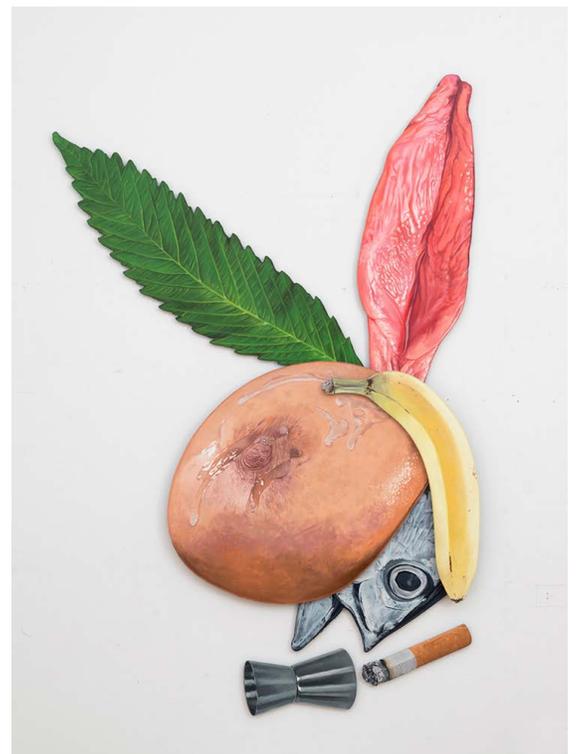
"Kanye is really interesting because he embodies contradictions. He is the Louis Vuitton Don, but he's also self-deni-grating," said Steiner. "A lot of his lyrics talk about how he's wearing this or that, and then he makes fun of himself for indulging in it."

With all of the logo-mania taking over right now, especially in fashion, Steiner's exhibit couldn't come at a more suitable time.

"I think that we're all sort of implicated in conspicuous consumption, myself included. But, I can understand why some people might [be], especially if you come from a situation where it's important or it's a survival tactic," said Steiner. "I don't draw any moral conclusions from it. But, I do want to draw some attention to it and make people conscious of what they're choosing to do."

Likelihood of Confusion runs through November 15

Joshua Liner Gallery
540 West 28th Street
New York, NY 10001



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