

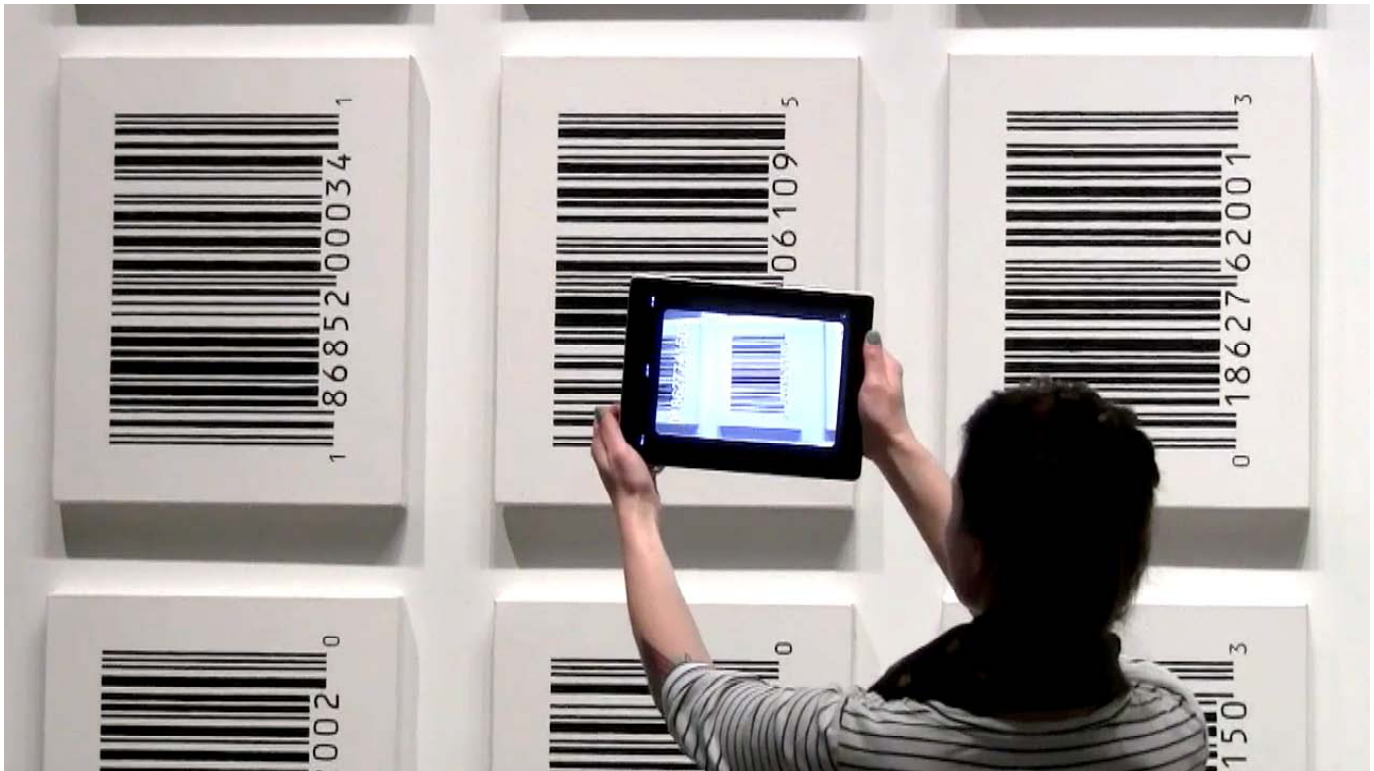
“I Am What I Eat”



Scott Blake's 32 hand-painted versions of the barcodes found on food items in his pantry underscore the links between identity and consumption in a world increasingly dominated by digital data. First successfully implemented in 1974, it is impossible today to imagine a major grocery store operating without barcodes and scanners. Grocers now encourage customers to register for a frequent buyer card, which tracks their purchases via barcodes in order to offer personalized discounts based on buying patterns. In the databanks of stores, individual shoppers exist as a log of purchases, as collections of barcode numbers.

The barcodes paintings can be scanned with a smartphone or tablet application to reveal the items the artist has consumed.

Each painting is 16 inches wide by 20 inches tall for an overall size of 156 x 92 inches.



The barcodes can be scanned with a smartphone or tablet application to reveal the items the artist has consumed. Scott Blake has also created a custom video application in which he talks about the products.



32 Barcode Painting Items

Alternative Baking Company Oatmeal Cookie
Applegate Farms Cheese
California Pizza Kitchen Sicilian Crispy
Corona Light Beer
Earthbound Farm Salad
Endangered Species Dark Chocolate Bar
Gerolsteiner Sparkling Mineral Water
Grey Poupon Mustard
Heineken Light Beer
Heinz Organic Ketchup
Hendrick's Gin
Hormel Natural Choice Bacon
Kashi Chewy Happy Trail Mix
Kashi Cookies Oatmeal Dark Chocolate
Kashi GoLean Crunch Cereal
Kashi Oatmeal Raisin Flax Cookies

La Preferida Black Beans
Mom's Garlic & Basil Spaghetti Sauce
MorningStar Farms Veggie Burger
Muir Glen Tomatoes
Nakano Rice Vinegar
Orbit Chewing Gum
Pepperidge Farm Bread
Pistachios Roasted & Salted
Pom Pomegranate Juice
Redhot Blue Corn Chips
San Pellegrino Mineral Water
Sriracha Hot Chili Sauce
Talent Gelato Double Dark Chocolate
Talent Raspberry Sorbetto
Tropicana Orange Juice
Whole Foods Eggs



Scott Blake live video streamed the painting process for three weeks straight in 2012.

STOCKED: CONTEMPORARY ART FROM THE GROCERY AISLES

Curated by Emily Stamey

Artists in the exhibition:

Sonny Assu, **Scott Blake**, Louis Cameron, Hillary Carlip, Matt Fidler, Jody Gnant, Adriane Herman, David Hilliard, **Damien Hirst**, Christian Jankowski, Hal Kirkland, Kyle MacDonald, Julian Montague, Gary Lachance, Karyn Olivier, Lucy + Jorge Orta, Jonathan Seliger, Brian Ulrich, Rachel Perry Welty, and **Andy Warhol**.

Ulrich Museum of Art at Wichita State University in Kansas
January 19, 2013 to April 14, 2013

Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art in Arizona
May 25, 2013 to September 1, 2013

Faulconer Gallery at Grinnell College in Iowa
September 20, 2013 to December 15, 2013

University of Wyoming Museum of Art in Wyoming
March 15, 2014 to June 1, 2014



"Museum stocks shelves with grocery art" by Sonja Haller in The Arizona Republic newspaper and web video.



“I Am What I Eat,” in which artist Scott Blake presents hand-painted, enlarged replicas of the Universal Product Code bar codes found on 32 food items from his grocery list. The work pays homage to the 32 soup-can paintings that Andy Warhol debuted in 1962. Smartphone and tablet users can focus on the bar codes and discover the food/beverage items represented.

"SMoCA exhibit finds the art in the grocery aisle" by Nick Blumberg on KJZZ 91.5 FM Phoenix Public Radio.

You’ve probably got a good shot at guessing the very first pieces in "Stocked: Contemporary Art from the Grocery Aisles" — two of Andy Warhol’s Campbell’s Soup cans. To the right, a wall of barcodes, hand-painted by artist Scott Blake. After SMoCA’s associate curator Emily Stamey told me they actually work, I took out my phone, downloaded a scanner app, and tried it. “Kashi TLC cookies,” Stamey said, looking at the iPhone’s screen.

"What grocery lists can tell us" by Brien McElhatten on "The List" KNXV ABC Channel 15 in Phoenix, AZ.

On the right, a giant wall of barcodes pulls you near. The barcode made grocery shopping convenient and efficient; it’s black on white pattern plastered on every item in the store. Now the symbol of consumer culture is painted on canvas in the exhibit hall. There are many of them, and each is an enlarged reproduction of an actual barcode. You can use a scanner app on your smartphone to read each one!

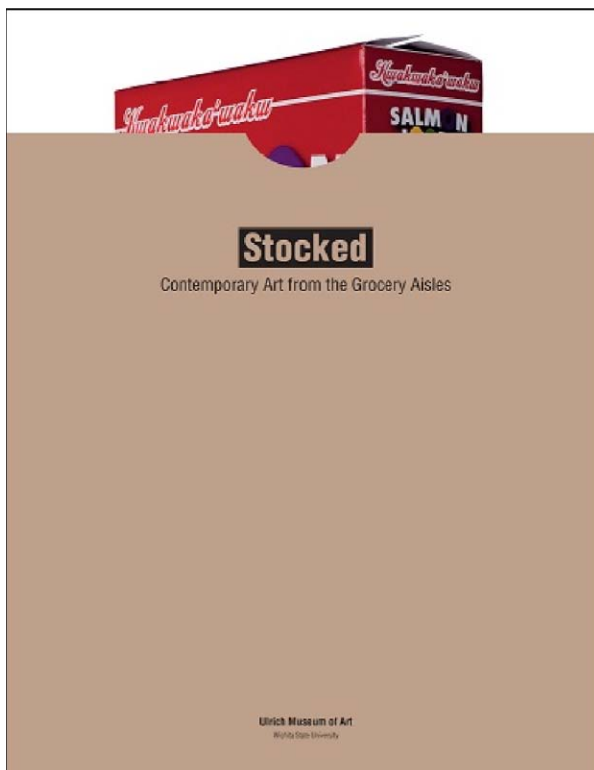


Campbell's. Coca-Cola. Del Monte. Kellogg's. In the late 1950s and 1960s, these food conglomerates became household names as America witnessed a revolution in the production, retail, and consumption of grocery items. More and more, it was not raw ingredients one purchased, but packaged and processed foods that were chosen according to their labels and one's perception of the brands they represented.

Campbell's. Coca-Cola. Del Monte. Kellogg's. These brands were also the subjects of the mid-20th-century pop artists. As corporations revolutionized the food industry, these artists turned the art world upside down by unabashedly depicting common consumer products, often using reproductive techniques and designs borrowed from commercial marketing.

Campbell's. Coca-Cola. Del Monte. Kellogg's. In the second decade of the 21st century, we still know these brands produce soup, sodas, fruit, and breakfast cereal. Yet, our present moment is markedly different from that of 50 years ago. Our grocery-shopping experiences now include computerized terminals, digital coupons, and products covered in labels highlighting nutrition content. Documentaries such as *Food Inc.*, books such as Mark Bittman's *Food Matters*, and television programs such as Jamie Oliver's *Food Revolution* are but a few indicators that Americans are reconsidering what they eat, how they eat it, and even the sources of their food.

Stocked: Contemporary Art from the Grocery Aisles presents the work of contemporary artists who, directly and indirectly, take the grocery store and consumption of its products as their subjects. Using a variety of styles and media, they keenly and cleverly investigate not only the grocery items we purchase, but also the physical and psychological environments in which we shop, the individuals and social frameworks we encounter there, and the cultural norms that inform our habits of consumption.



An 88-page, full-color publication of the same name accompanies this exhibition. Purchase online at www.ulrich.wichita.edu/marketplace

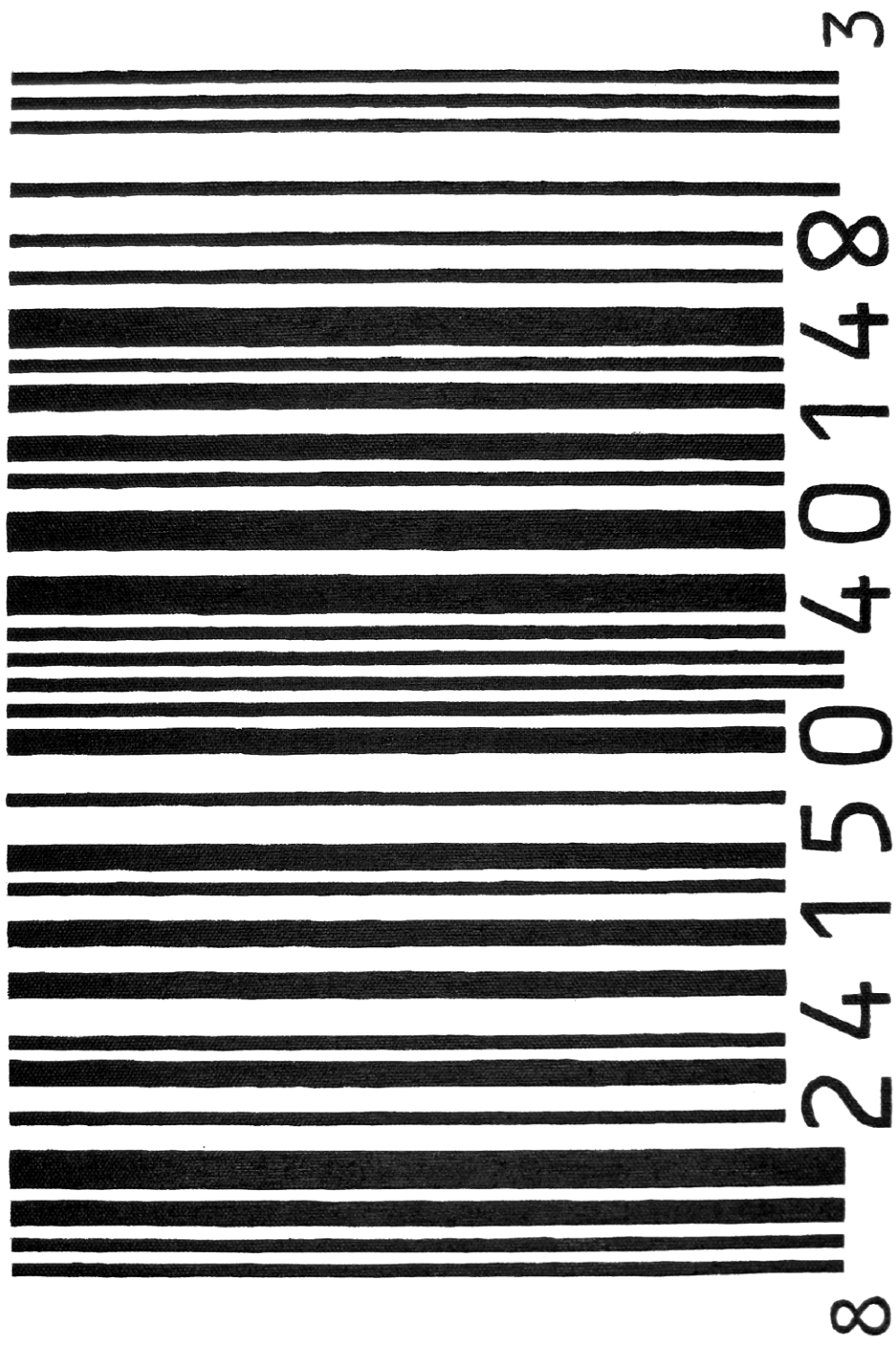
“Aisles and Shelves” excerpt from exhibition catalog by Emily Stamey.

As impossible as it is to imagine a grocery store without rows of carts waiting at the door, it is equally impossible to imagine filling those carts with items that are not marked with the Universal Product Code. The UPC, known popularly as the barcode, was likewise originally developed for and introduced in grocery stores. First successfully used in a commercial application in 1974—to ring up a pack of Wrigley's chewing gum at an Ohio supermarket—the barcode has revolutionized not only grocery shopping, but all spectrums of retail.

Scott Blake hand-paints replicas of these ubiquitous black bands, selected from items he has purchased at the grocery store. At first glance, his suite of black-and-white linear compositions reads as a purely formal, minimalist project. The 32 canvases pay deliberate homage to the 32 same-sized canvases on which Andy Warhol painted his famous soup cans for their 1962 debut. Blake's title, *I Am What I Eat*, likewise acknowledges Warhol's famed laconic explanation for painting the popular cans. When asked by critic Gene R. Swenson why he started making images of Campbell's soup, Warhol responded: "Because I used to drink it. I used to have the same lunch every day, for twenty years, I guess, the same thing over and over again." Yet, unlike Warhol, Blake does not foreground his food choice or its brand. Rather, if viewers want to know the items the artist has eaten, they can scan the barcodes into a smartphone.

As with Warhol's project, however, what began as Blake's personal action—eating—became a series of images about the state of public consumption. Warhol's soup cans reflected a moment in which mass production of foods and the mass marketing of brands such as Campbell's were at critical points of escalation. Blake's paintings are pointedly indicative of his own historical context a half-century later. The items a viewer discovers in scanning the codes include Kashi Chewy Happy Trail Mix cookies, Whole Foods eggs, MorningStar Farms veggie burgers, Earthbound Farm salad, and Endangered Species dark chocolate. These products represent the boom in natural and organic foods over the past decade. Though it has slowed in the wake of the 2008 economic crisis, in the eight years prior the industry grew by 15-20 percent annually. It also shifted from a market dominated by independent companies to one owned by multinational corporations, among them the same Kellogg's and Coca-Cola whose products appear in the work of the 1960s pop artists.

Though seemingly abstract, Blake's suite of painted barcodes is very much a self-portrait. Increasingly, grocery stores encourage shoppers to register for a frequent buyer card, which tracks their purchases via barcodes in order to offer not only storewide discounts, but also personalized specials based on buying patterns. In the databanks of stores, suppliers, and market research firms with access to these frequent buyer accounts, individual shoppers exist as a log of purchases, as collections of barcode numbers.



UPC: 824150401483
Pom Pomegranate Juice