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>> Andy Warhol kicked off the art and spirits combo in the early '80s with his design for this Absolut Magazine advertisement.

ART X COMMERCE

CIGAR AND SPIRITS BRANDS RETHINK COLLABORATIONS

by Molly Headley

Andy Warhol made it a thing. It was the early '80s. The creed was More & Bigger. Brand collaborations with artists were reborn with tongue-in-cheek decadence and intentionally blurred boundaries, launching cross-overs between worlds that had traditionally stayed separate. Art merged with merchandising. Commercialism became a culture.

Forty years after Warhol's soup cans and Absolut Vodka paintings became iconic symbols of both Pop Art and branding, art collabs are starting to look a little different. It's no longer enough to simply merge a brand's identity with an artist's style—people expect more meaningful partnerships.

Companies are imagining new ways to make an impact in the art world. From residencies and mentorships that support up-and-coming artists to collaborations that consider the cultural identity of the product, one thing is certain, 2023 will continue to revamp the intersections between creativity and commerce.