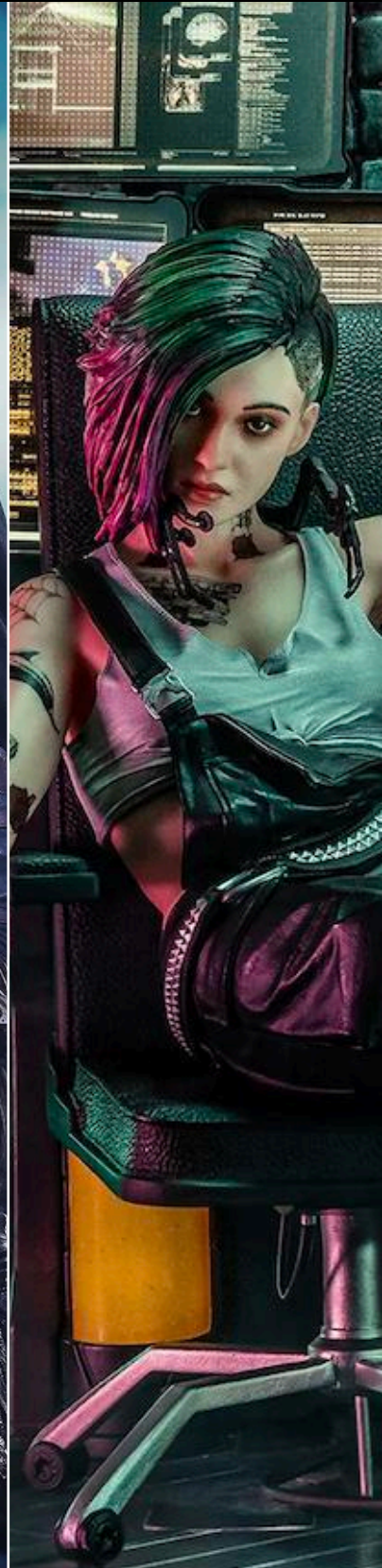
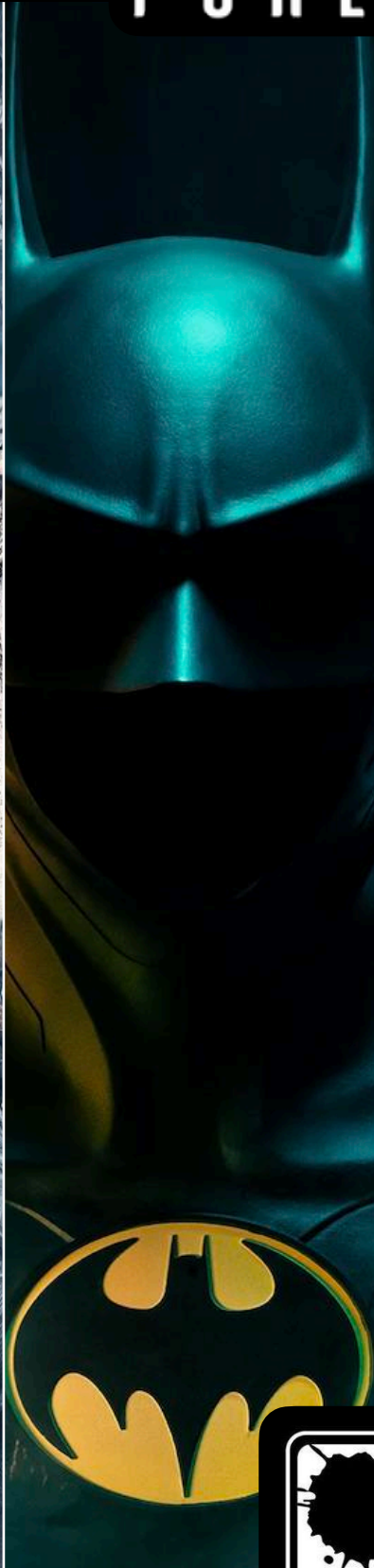


PUREARTS



BUS348 CREATIVE BRAND MARKETING

NIMA SHIRALIZADEH | ID.220325640

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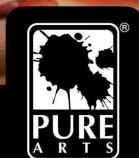
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1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a comprehensive audit of PureArts, a premium manufacturer of licensed statues/figurines in the entertainment industry, founded in 2008. Known for meticulous craftsmanship and strong ties with licensors such as Ubisoft and Warner Bros, PureArts has cultivated a loyal, passionate, and niche community of consumers.

The analysis begins with an overview of the brand's market position, supported by a SWOT analysis that highlights its strengths in premium craftsmanship and community-building, while noting weaknesses in inclusivity due to high product prices. PureArts' advertising strategies, particularly through social media and events, are recognised as effective tools for engagement and community growth.

Brand equity is explored through *awareness, identity, image, and loyalty*. PureArts' brand awareness is achieved by *credibility* through its licenses and *differentiation* through product innovation, such as its *Animus Line*. Applying Aaker's (1997) framework, PureArts' brand identity is portrayed as a *sincere, exciting, and competent*. Using Keller's Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework, the brand image is comprehensively explored. Throughout the report, PureArts is recognised as a Neo-tribe, where passionate collectors demonstrate loyalty by connecting with community members, and actively embrace their roles as 'prosumers.'

To address key challenges, the report recommends diversifying PureArts' product offerings with smaller, and more affordable statues to increase inclusivity while maintaining premium appeal. Additionally, leveraging brand storytelling, such as showcasing the design and manufacturing process through the lens of PureArts' heritage for quality and craftsmanship, is proposed as a way of enhancing brand loyalty.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Founded in 2008 by Hugues Martel, PureArts is a leading creator and manufacturer of high-quality figurines and statues within the video game and film/TV industries (PureArts, 2017). With offices in China and North America, PureArts has a robust team and infrastructure that enables them to manage processes, such as creation and production (Ibid). For a breakdown of the 'PureArts Process', refer to Appendix A.

As evidenced in Figure 1, PureArts reputation is strongly entrenched from their licenses with key players within the film/TV and video game industry, namely Ubisoft, CD Projekt RED (CDPR), Studio Canal, and more (PureArts, 2017). This makes PureArts a popular and favourable brand amongst members of film/TV and gaming communities.

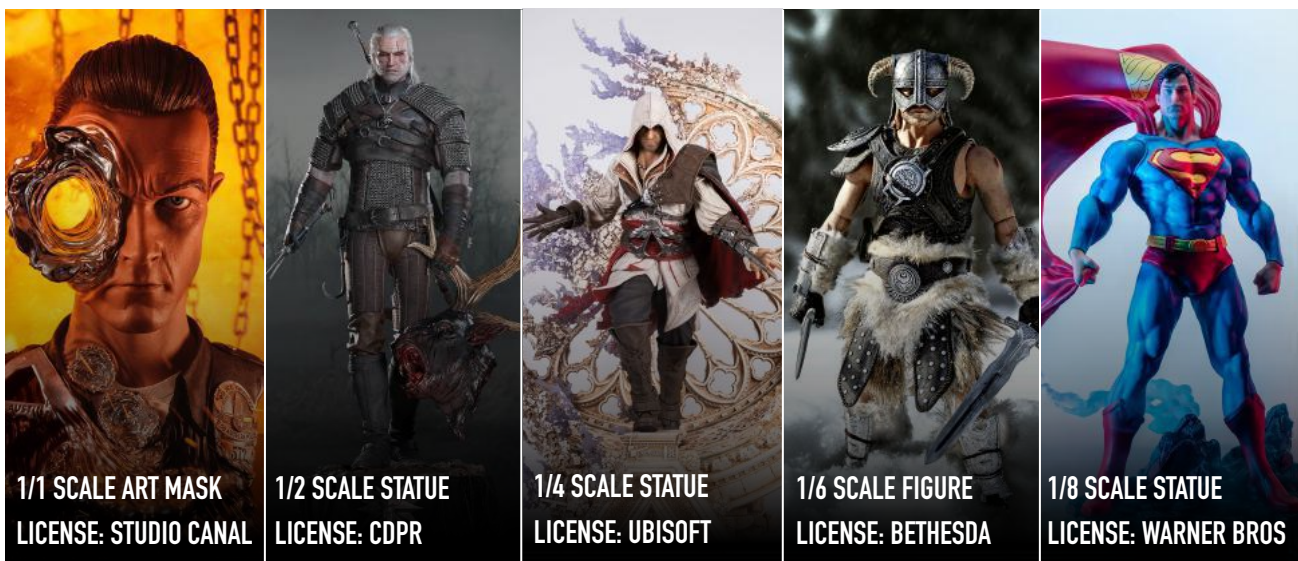


FIGURE 1. A series of PureArts licenses and product range.

1.2 INDUSTRY OVERVIEW AND MARKET SHARE

The global figurines/statues industry is promising. Collectors, fans, or enthusiasts seek and purchase highly-detailed collectibles made from PVC or polyresin, serving as unique and tangible representation of key moments or iconic characters from pop culture — see Figure 2 for an example (Business Research Insights, 2024). The market is experiencing significant year-on-year

(YOY) growth due to diversifying consumer preferences, emergence of franchises, in tandem with economic factors (Global Growth Insights, 2023). Furthermore, the United States is a dominant market, having generated over \$3.3 billion USD in revenue (Statista, 2024). Hence, in 2023 the market was valued at \$15.34 billion USD (Ibid). Insight into the sales revenue of some key players in the market confirms this picture: *Hot Toys* (\$400 million USD); *Iron Studios* (\$50 million USD); *Prime 1 Studio* (\$150 million USD) (Global Growth Insights, 2023).

However, a significant restraint of the statue/figurine market alludes to price-sensitivity (Market Decipher, 2024). Premium figurines come with a premium price, reducing demand during economic downturns. This makes it essential to balance quality and price, or to cater to a cost-conscious segment (Global Growth Insights, 2023), in order to foster an inclusive brand perception.



FIGURE 2. PureArts 'Assassin's Creed: Animus Connor 1/4 Scale Polyresin Statue' from the Ubisoft game 'Assassin's Creed: III' (PureArts, 2022).

1.3 SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis examines the internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats that impact a business or brand (Minsky and Aron, 2021). Table 1 outlines PureArts’ SWOT analysis.

TABLE 1. SWOT analysis for PureArts.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diverse product portfolio (PureArts, 2024a). - Strong brand community on social media (PureArts, 2024b; 2024c; 2024d; 2024e; 2024f). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimal emphasis on cheaper statues for cost-conscious consumers (Appendix B). - High average price points for statues/figures.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capitalise the emergence of popular franchises (Allnutt, 2024; Faber, 2024) <i>confirmed by global growth insights</i>. - Leverage the global reduction in disposable incomes by product portfolio diversification (IMF, 2024). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competitors offering cheaper products (Malta Statue Collectors, n.d.). - Global reduction in consumers disposable income (IMF, 2024).

PureArts demonstrates strength in its diverse product portfolio, offering a range of statues/figurines across different franchises, with innovative features like integrated LEDs (PureArts, 2024a). Profoundly, PureArts has cultivated a loyal brand community across social media, contributing to brand visibility and engagement — over 123,000 cumulative followers across Instagram, TikTok, X, YouTube, and Facebook, as of November 2024 (PureArts, 2024b; 2024c; 2024e; 2024f). A distinct weakness lies in limited focus on smaller, cost-effective statues (e.g. 1/8 scale), which may alienate price-conscious consumers (refer to Appendix B). In tandem with its high average price points (\$800-\$1000+ USD), brand accessibility is impacted during economic downturns (IMF, 2024). However, they create an opportunity: *diversification into smaller, low-cost collectibles for price-conscious consumers*. Capitalising on franchises like *Fallout* and *House of the Dragon*, both experiencing surging popularity (Allnutt, 2024; Faber, 2024), could expand PureArts’ appeal to new fandoms and generate brand equity. Although, competitors such as Iron Studios po-

se a threat to PureArts, through greater variety in price and quality (Malta Statue Collectors, n.d.). Combined with declining disposable incomes (IMF, 2024), this underscores the importance of strategic product diversification to maintain brand relevance.



2. BRAND PROFILE

2.1 NAME, LOGO, SLOGANS

An assessment of PureArts' brand profile reveals a complex picture. The brand name, PureArts, represents a focus on high-quality and meticulously designed statues — 'Pure' signifies clarity and excellence, while 'Arts' emphasises creativity and craftsmanship. This encapsulates the Warmth and Competence Theory (Fournier & Alvarez, 2012), whereby *warmth* is created by meaningful connections with fans through culturally resonant products, while demonstrating *competence* by delivering premium-quality collectibles.

The minimalistic black-and-white colour palette of the PureArts logo reinforces its premium image. This design allows for dynamic adaptability, enabling the logo to adopt the colours and style of the franchises it represents. For example, when announcing a new product, the logo is often customised to mirror the aesthetic of the franchise's universe, evoking a sense of brand familiarity among consumers (see Figure 3).

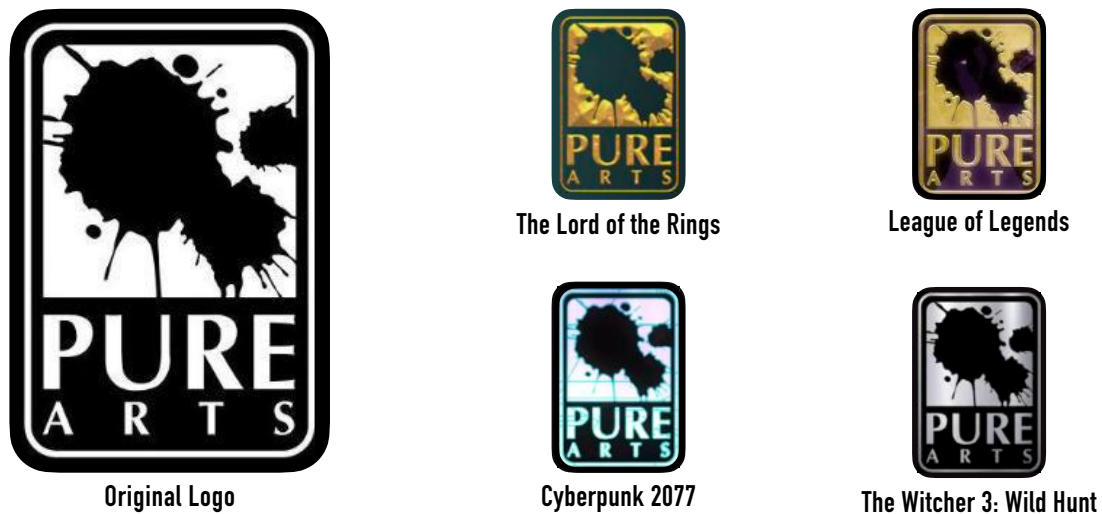


FIGURE 3. A series of different PureArts logos adapted according to different franchises.

PureArts doesn't rely on slogans to communicate value, but on their licenses. The brand identity is deeply tied to its licenses, as consumers associate PureArts with the franchises it represents, rather than solely the brand. For example, a consumer may purchase a *Cyberpunk 2077* statue for their connection to the franchise, however the statues quality enhances their perception of PureArts.



This creates an unconventional form of brand anthropomorphism — while it’s traditionally achieved through humanlike qualities (Portal, Abratt, and Bendixen, 2018), this report asserts that anthropomorphism is achieved through the various franchises PureArts is associated with. Ultimately, PureArts positions itself as more than a manufacturer, leveraging cultural capital to elevate it’s brand profile.

2.2 ADVERTISING

PureArts predominantly uses social media and events for advertising. As highlighted in Section 1.3, PureArts ubiquitously use Instagram, Facebook, X, and TikTok to post content about product announcements, pre-order updates, and community posts (see Appendix C). Although infrequent, some posts feature celebrity involvement, namely actors/actresses from respective franchises. For example, the actress for *Lady Dimitrescu* from the *Resident Evil* franchise was involved in a statue signing for fans to purchase (see Figure 4). Keel and Natarajan (2012, p. 695) define this as celebrity mono-branding, since a complex brand like PureArts relies on cultural input to enhance their brand image.



FIGURE 4. Promotion for ‘Lady Dimitrescu 1/4 Scale Statue’ signing by the actress, Maggie Robertson (PureArts, 2024g).

Furthermore, PureArts is renowned for being present at most pop culture conventions across North America and Europe. This provides them the opportunity to display upcoming collectibles and allow fans to interact with the brand (see Figure 5).



FIGURE 5. PureArts booth at MCM Comic Con x EGX 2024 (Author).

This is a crucial advertising medium for PureArts. As explored in section 2.1, the PureArts brand profile is significantly elevated by its licenses. Wiedmann and Ludewig (2008) suggest that while brand licensing strategies explicitly focus on leveraging customer perceptions, an implied benefit lies in gaining access to the established community and market of the licensed brand. Fournier and Lee (2009) further advocate the value of brand communities as social hubs where fans can interact and connect. Hence, conventions provide an ideal platform for PureArts to leverage these dynamics through event marketing, which enhances their brand positioning. These events allow PureArts to engage directly with fans, improving brand image and perception (see Figure 6).



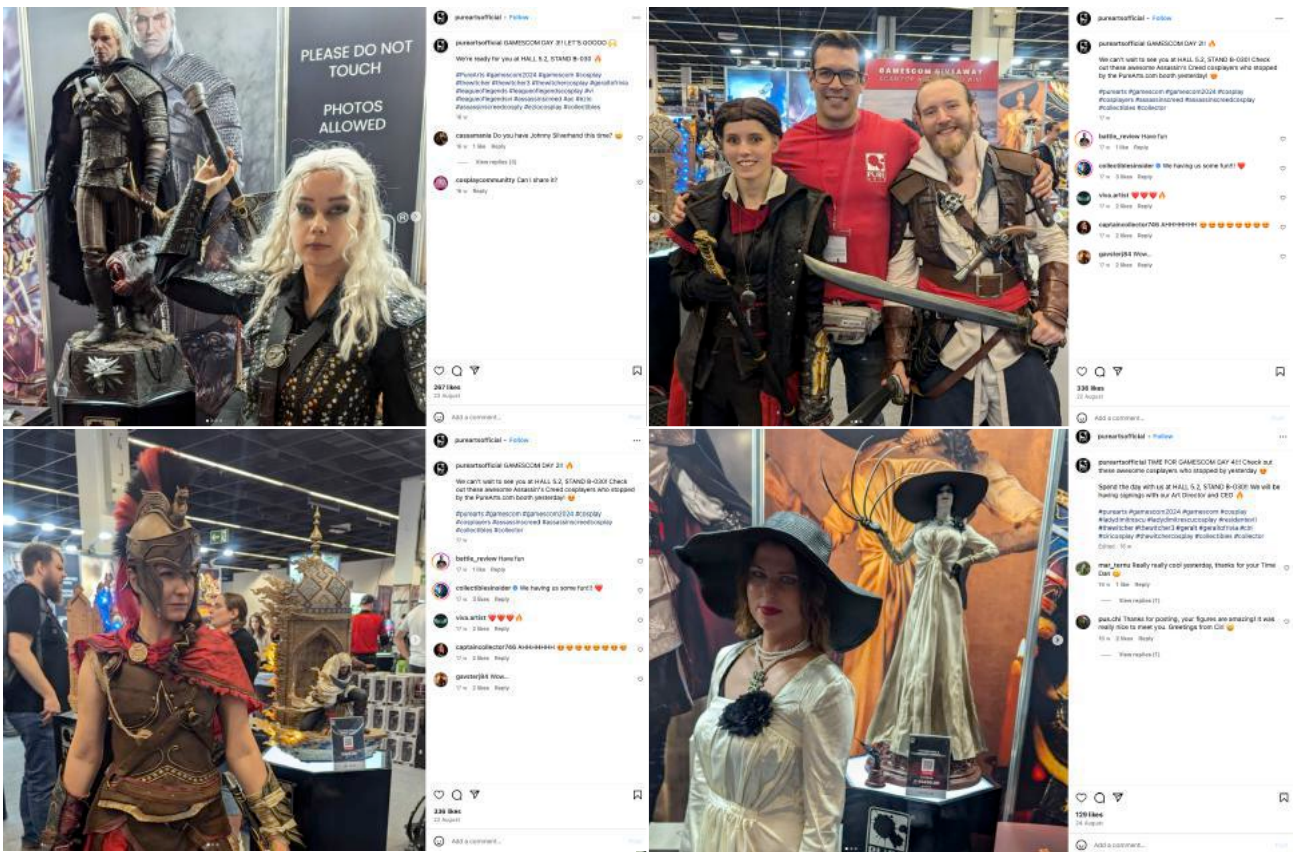


FIGURE 6. PureArts community in action (PureArts, 2024h; 2024i; 2024j).

2.3 BRAND POSITIONING

While it is conventional to rely on perceptual maps to assess brand positioning, Dawar and Bagga (2015) Centrality-Distinctiveness (C-D) map provides a fresh perspective. By positioning brands according to how representative they are within a category, and their uniqueness from competitors, it helps identify how they balance these goals to drive consumer perception, sales and pricing power.

PureArts demonstrates greater distinctiveness over centrality in the premium collectibles market. While they aren't as mainstream as competitors like Dark Horse, PureArts distinguishes itself with high-quality products and craftsmanship (see Appendix D). In terms of distinctiveness, PureArts establishes itself by their iconic product lines and innovations such as the *Assassin's Creed Animus Line* (see Appendix E), which collectors recognise as emblematic of PureArts' design philosophy.

Hence, this solidifies its position in the 'Unconventional' quadrant of the C-D Map, due to niche audiences demand for premium products, in tandem with PureArts focus on quality craftsmanship and innovative approach (see Figure 7).

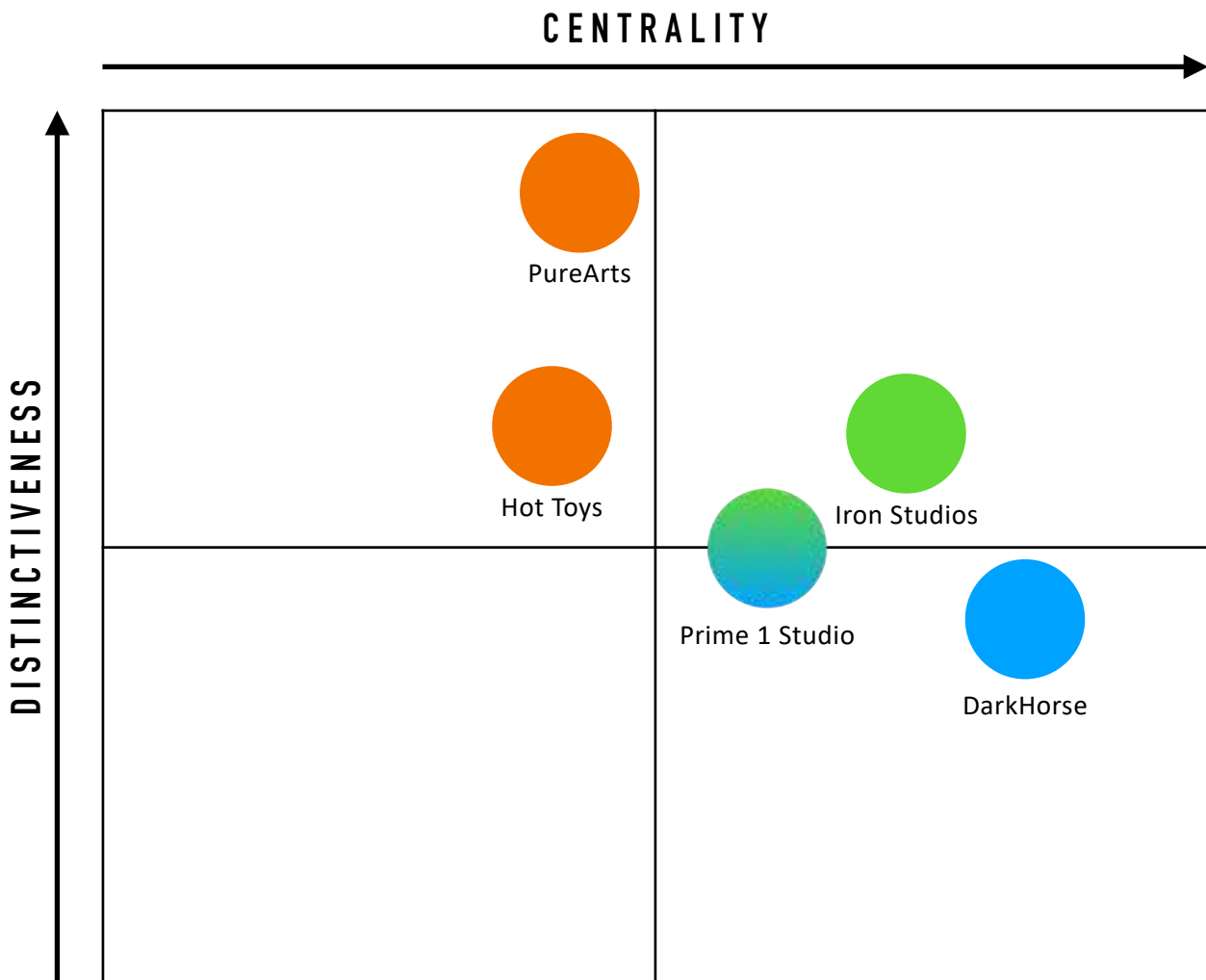


FIGURE 7. Centrality-Distinctiveness Map for PureArts among rival brands in the statue/collectibles industry. While Dawar and Bagga (2015) suggest that circle size on the map reflects financial performance, the limited availability of such data for most brands necessitates the use of standardised circle sizes.



3. BRAND EQUITY

3.1 BRAND AWARENESS

Aaker (2007) identifies *visibility, credibility, differentiation* and *communication efficacy* as key outcomes of successful brand innovation. For this report, *credibility* and *differentiation* are applied to assess PureArts' brand awareness.

According to Aaker (2007, p. 11), branding a '*claim*' signals value to customers. As explored in Section 2.1, PureArts' archives credibility through licenses with globally recognised franchises, such as *Assassin's Creed* and *The Witcher*. Their dynamic logo adaptations amplify credibility, and thus awareness, as they serve as a visual cue of authenticity for fans, enhancing recall in different social and cultural contexts.

In the pursuit of brand awareness, Aaker (2007, pp. 8-9) notes a strong brand stymies market commoditisation - a phenomenon preventing brand awareness. PureArts stands out with meticulous craftsmanship and emotional connections with fans (see Section 2.2), hence achieving differentiation and combatting commoditisation. For example, promotional videos for their *Animus Line* (see Appendix E) on YouTube integrate franchise-specific themes and soundtracks, connecting with avid fans and collectors (PureArts, 2019). This generates electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) among communities like the Assassin's Creed fandom and the official PureArts Collectors Group on Facebook. Under Keller's (1993, p. 3) vernacular, this allows them to identify the PureArts brand across various contexts.

3.2 BRAND IDENTITY

Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality framework provides a structured approach to articulating PureArt's brand identity, especially through the lens of its consumers. She defines brand personality as "*the set of human characteristics associated with a brand*" (Ibid, p. 347). Hence, she establishes five dimensions of brand personality, comprising of: *sincerity; excitement; competence; sophistication* and; *ruggedness*.

By extending this framework to PureArts, we are greeted with a sincere and competent, yet excit-



ing and culturally-oriented brand. See Figure 8 for an overview.

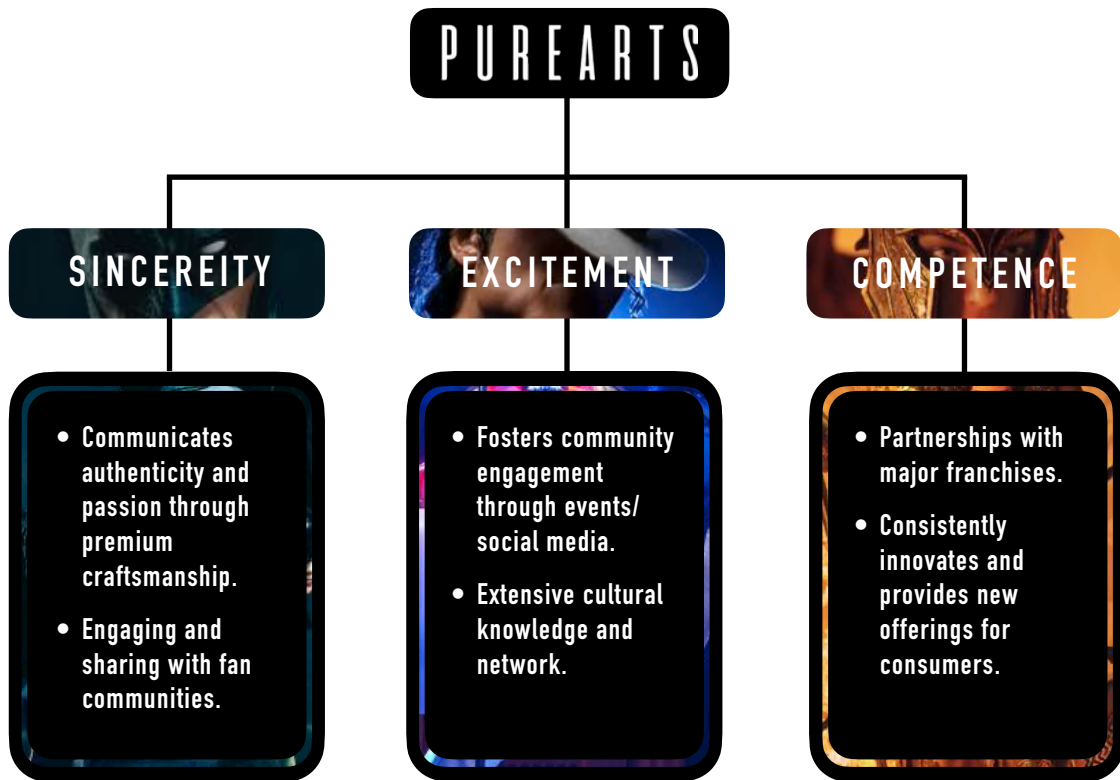


FIGURE 8. PureArts brand personality adapted from Aaker (1997, p. 352, Figure 1).

3.3 BRAND IMAGE

The achievement of a strong brand, and thus, brand image, can be exemplified through Keller’s (1993) Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). This refers to the “*differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand*” (Ibid, p. 8). By placing the consumer at the heart of brand development, the CBBE Resonance Pyramid provides a sequential framework in earning brand equity (Keller, 2013, p. 107).

Figure 9 illustrates the CBBE Pyramid in relation to PureArts. At the base, PureArts’ identity stems from its community-orientation, premium craftsmanship, and presence at conventions. Performance is exemplified by high-quality, innovative designs (refer to Appendix D), while imagery reflects a youthful, pop-culture driven persona. Despite being praised for product quality (see Ap-



pendix F), PureArts faces criticism for a lack of inclusivity and the financial demand of its products (see Appendix G). However, the brand fosters emotional connections by linking consumers to treasured franchises and characters, evoking joy and satisfaction. At the top, PureArts excels in resonance by cultivating a loyal online community, where Facebook group members engage in conspicuous consumption by sharing their collection, and actively discussing the brand (see Appendix H).

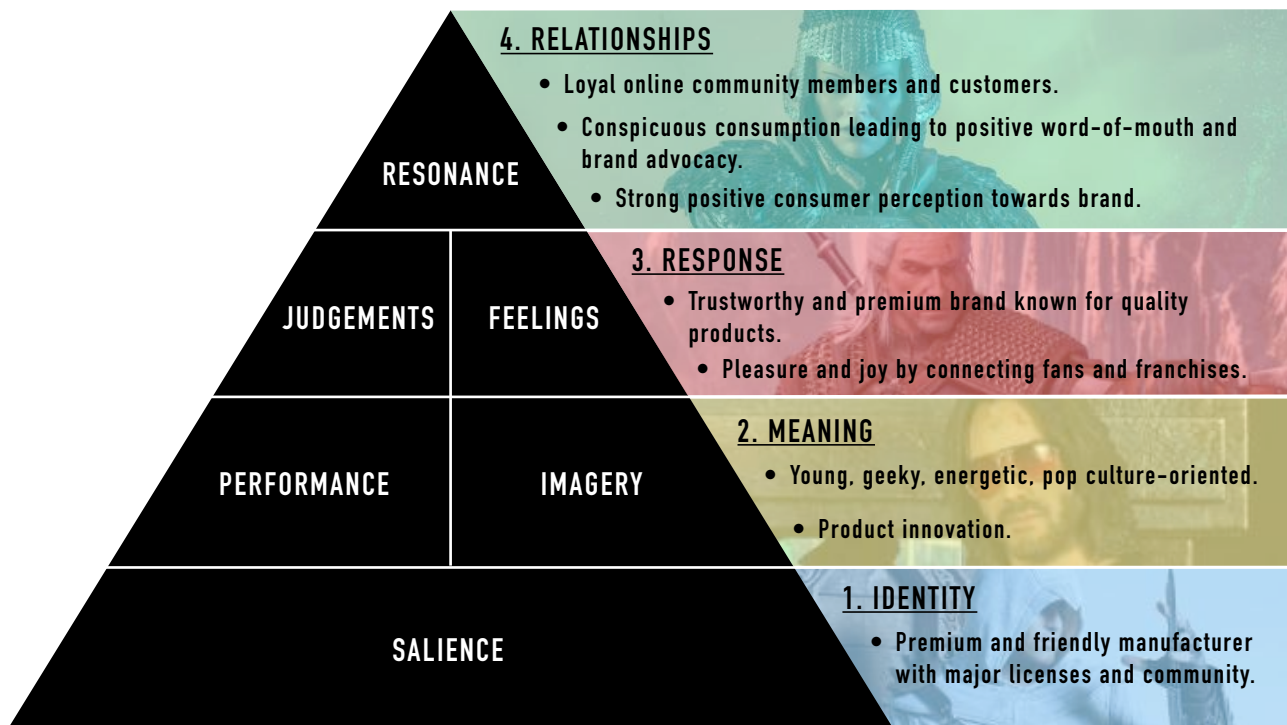


FIGURE 9. PureArts CBBE Brand Resonance Pyramid adapted from Keller (2013, p. 109, Figure 3-1).

3.4 BRAND LOYALTY

Briefly established in Section 3.3, brand loyalty is a core strength for PureArts. Section 2.1/2.2 provide an understanding as to loyalty being derived from ardent upholders of video game/TV/film franchises. However, PureArts develops this loyalty further through community.

Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) argue that brands market *with* rather than *to* them, a concept reinforced by the evolution of brand communities in the Web 2.0 era (Cova and White, 2010, pp. 257-258). This is epitomised by the PureArts Collectors Facebook group (refer to Appendix H), where displays of conspicuous consumption and mediated experiences (Elliot and Wattansuwan



1988, p. 135) thrive through online interactions and brand discourse (see Figure 10).



FIGURE 10. Product suggestions made by community members from the PureArts Collectors group on Facebook, in relation to the *Assassin's Creed* franchise (Author).

PureArts fosters a Neo-tribe of passionate collectors who join through shared interest, discourse, and purchasing premium collectibles. While Neo-tribes are inherently close-knit (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy, & Pervan, 2018, p. 120), the high financial cost of participation poses a challenge to brand inclusivity. This exclusivity impacts long-term brand loyalty and limits the community's scale, leaving PureArts with a niche audience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The PureArts brand exhibits strong ties to unique licenses and fosters exceptional loyalty among its community of hardcore and passionate fans of *Assassin's Creed*, *The Witcher*, *League of Legends*, *The Lord of the Rings* and more. However, a key weakness lies in its lack of inclusivity. As noted in Sections 1.2 and 1.3, the market for statues/figurines has become price-sensitive, and feedback from collectors (Section 3.3; Appendix H) highlights demand for smaller, more affordable statues. While Section 3.4 acknowledges the PureArts brand as a Neo-tribe, this implicit exclusivity risks limiting long-term growth and brand image due to *high admission costs*. To address this, PureArts should expand its portfolio of smaller-scale, lower-cost statues, such as 1/8 scale PVC statues, while retaining their premium appeal (see Figure 11 for a comparison). This makes PureArts more competitive with rivals such as Dark Horse, and hence, would achieve more brand appeal and equity.

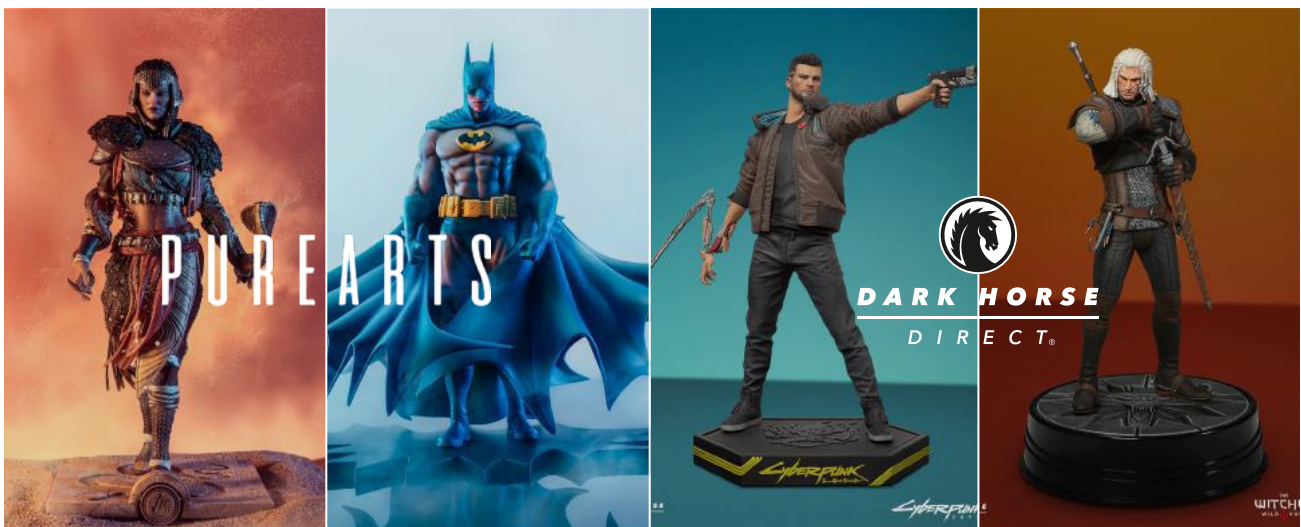


FIGURE 11. Visual comparison between current PureArts and Dark Horse 1/8 scale PVC statues.

Additionally, as Section 2.3 places PureArts in the 'Unconventional' quadrant of the C-D Map, the brand's premium craftsmanship can be leveraged further through storytelling. Da Costa (2019) describes storytelling as "the cohesive narrative that weaves together the facts and emotions that your brand evokes." PureArts could enhance engagement by showcasing the creation process behind its statues, particularly for products within the new *Prestige Line*. Content detailing design and manufacturing decisions would deepen consumers' appreciation for the brand, fostering stronger loyalty and equity (see Figure 12 for a concept).





FIGURE 12. *'BEHIND THE SCENES'* series idea, exemplified by a thumbnail concept art for YouTube. This would involve five to ten minute episodes showcasing the entire design process from start to finish, including interviews with designers and sculptors (Author).

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APPENDICES



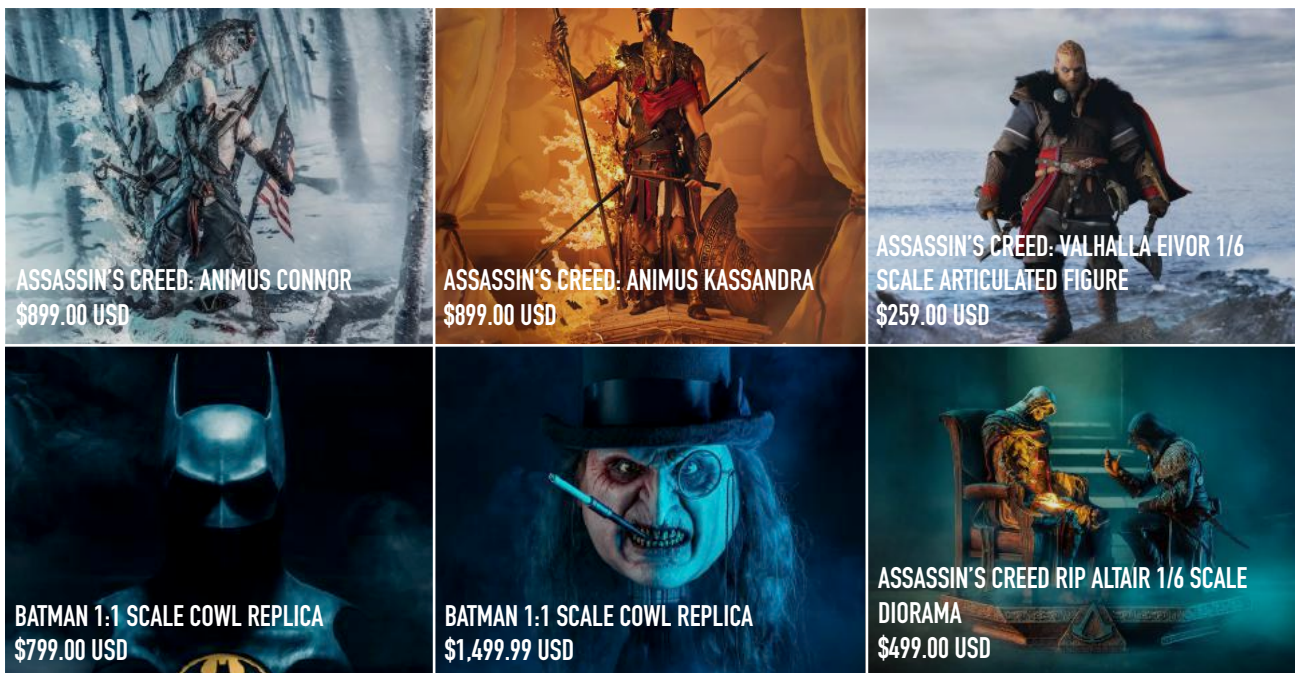
APPENDIX A — THE 'PUREARTS PROCESS'

An illustrative model of PureArts production process from the development of conceptual designs, to manufacture and distribution (PureArts, 2017).



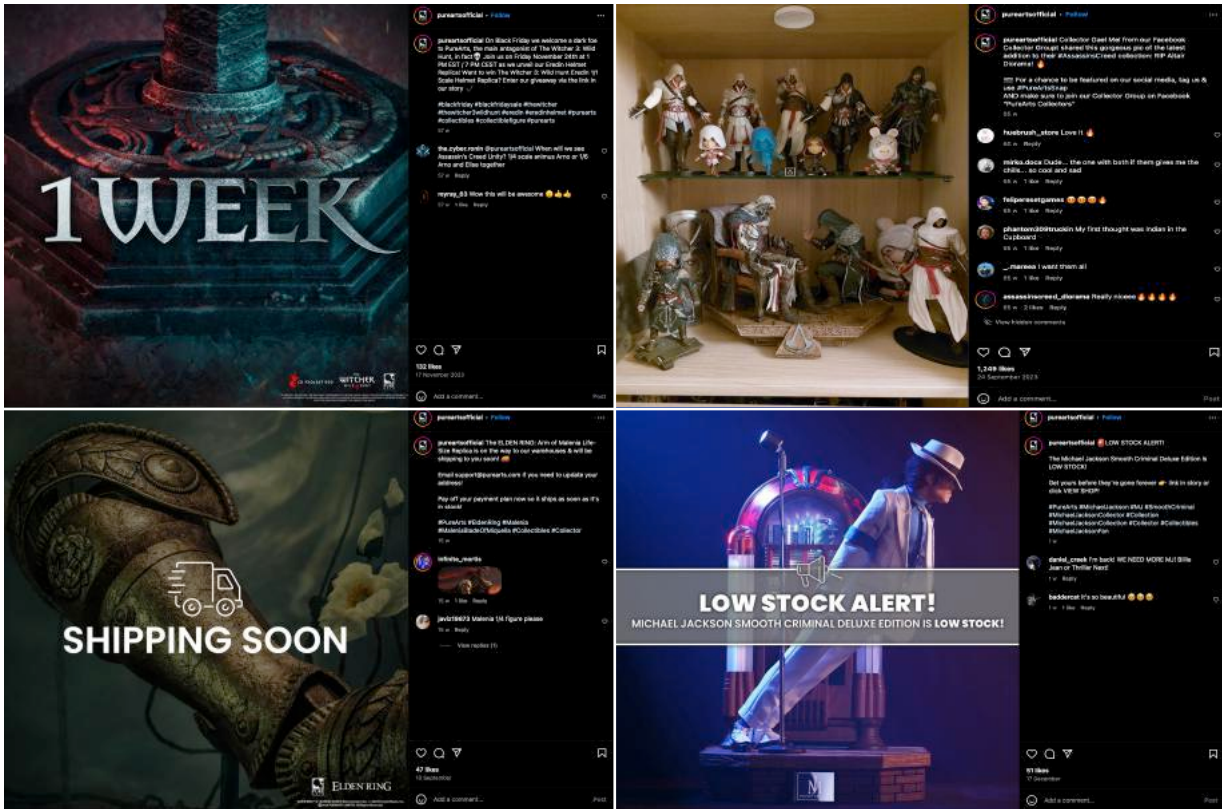
APPENDIX B — PUREARTS 2023 PRODUCT LAUNCH ROADMAP

By emphasising the price and scale of statues, this sample roadmap of PureArts products launched in 2023, exemplifies their lack of attention to smaller, and more affordable products.



APPENDIX C — PUREARTS SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

A sample of social media posts on the PureArts Instagram page (PureArts, 2024b).



APPENDIX D — PUREARTS PRODUCT INNOVATION

An image from the PureArts Facebook page highlighting the movement of eyes in a 1/6 articulated figure, from the recently announced 'The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt Gerald of Rivia 1/6 Scale Articulated Figure'.



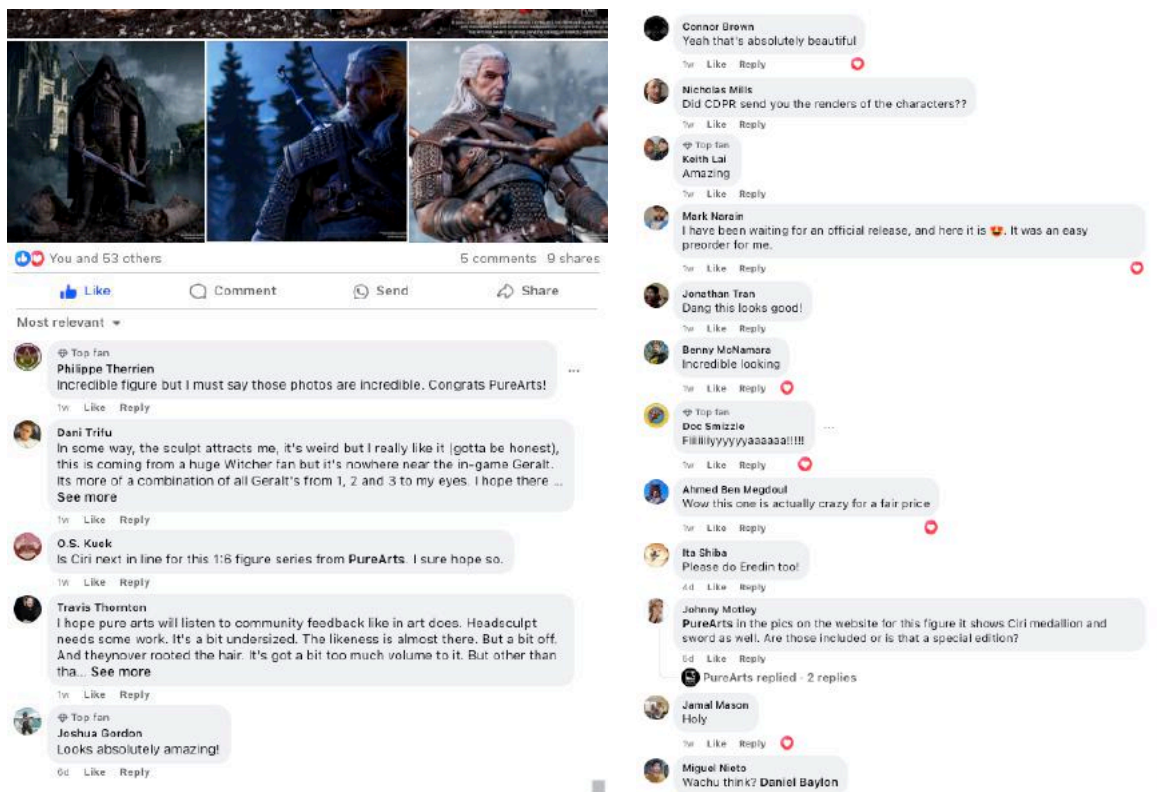
APPENDIX E — PUREARTS ASSASSIN'S CREED ANIMUS LINE

The *Animus Line* statues are a flagship product line for PureArts, since 2019.



APPENDIX F — PERCEPTION OF QUALITY FOR PUREARTS PRODUCTS

A compilation of supportive comments made on the PureArts Facebook page regarding product quality.



APPENDIX G — COMMUNITY DISCOURSE ON PRODUCT INCLUSIVITY

A sample of comments made on the PureArts Instagram page regarding the lack of 1/8 scale, or price-friendly statues.



APPENDIX H — PUREARTS COLLECTORS FACEBOOK GROUP

The PureArts Collectors group on Facebook serves as a hub for community members to share their collections, engage in discourse and provide product feedback and suggestions.

