



Andy Warhol
(American, 1928 - 1987)

Biography

Andy Warhol was born Andrew Warhola August 6, 1928. Born to Slovak immigrants, he was reared in a working class suburb of Pittsburgh. From an early age, Warhol showed an interest in photography and drawing, attending free classes at Carnegie Institute. As the only member of his family to attend college, he entered the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) in 1945, where he majored in pictorial design.

Upon graduation, Warhol moved to New York with fellow student Philip Pearlstein. He found steady work as a commercial artist working as an illustrator for several magazines including Vogue, Harper's Bazaar and The New Yorker. He also did advertising and window displays for retail stores such as Bonwit Teller and I. Miller. Prophetically, his first assignment was for Glamour magazine for an article titled "Success is a Job in New York."

Throughout the nineteen fifties, Warhol enjoyed a successful career as a commercial artist, winning several commendations from the Art Director's Club and the American Institute of Graphic Arts. During this period, he shortened his name to "Warhol." In 1952, the artist had his first solo exhibition at the Hugo Gallery, exhibiting Fifteen Drawings Based on the Writings of Truman Capote. Subsequently, Warhol's work was exhibited in several venues throughout the fifties including his first group show at The Museum of Modern Art in 1955. In 1953 the artist produced his first illustrated book, A is an Alphabet and Love is a Pink Cake, which he gave to his clients and associates. With a burgeoning career as an illustrator, he formed Andy Warhol Enterprises in 1957.

1960 marked a turning point in Warhol's prolific career. He painted his first works based on comics and advertisements, enlarging and transferring the source images onto his canvases with an opaque projector. In 1961, Warhol showed his paintings, Advertisement, Little King, Superman, Before and After and Saturday's Popeye in a window display of Bonwit Teller department store. Appropriating images from popular culture, Warhol created many paintings that remain icons of 20th-century art including the Campbell's Soup Can, Marilyn and Elvis series. In 1963 Warhol established a studio at 231 East 47th Street which became known as the "Factory."



In addition to painting and creating box sculptures such as Brillo Box and Heinz Box, Warhol began working in other mediums including record producing (The Velvet Underground), magazine publishing (Interview) and filmmaking. His avant-garde films such as Chelsea Girls, Blow Job and Empire have become classics of the underground genre. In 1968, Valerie Solanis, a periodic factory visitor, and sole member of SCUM (Society for Cutting Up Men) walked into the Factory and shot Warhol. The attack was near fatal.

In the 1970s, Warhol renewed his focus on painting and worked extensively on a commissioned basis both for corporations and for individuals whose portrait he painted. Works created in this decade include Skulls, Hammer and Sickles, Torsos, Maos and Shadows. Warhol also published The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (from A to B and Back Again). Firmly established as a major 20th-century artist and international celebrity, Warhol was given a major retrospective of his work at the Pasadena Art Museum which traveled to museums around the world. In the late seventies Warhol began dictating an oral diary to his colleague Pat Hackett, which became the basis for the best-selling Andy Warhol Diaries. He also frequented Studio 54 along with other members of the international jet-set saying, "I have a social disease. I have to go out every night."

The artist began the 1980s with the publication of POPism: The Warhol '60s. He also began work on Andy Warhol's TV, a series of half hour of video programs patterned after Interview magazine. In 1985, "Andy Warhol's Fifteen Minutes" appeared on MTV, half hour programs featuring celebrities, artists, musicians, and designers, with Warhol as the host. The paintings he created during this time included Dollar Signs, Guns and Last Suppers. He also produced several paintings in collaboration with other artists including Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Francesco Clemente. Following routine gall bladder surgery, Andy Warhol died of complications during his recovery on February 2, 1987. After his burial in Pittsburgh, his friends and associates organized a memorial mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. In 1989, the Museum of Modern Art in New York had a major retrospective of his works. In 2001 Heiner Bastian curated a Warhol retrospective that began in Berlin and traveled to the Tate in London and finally to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

Selected Collections

Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburg, USA
Múzeum Moderného Umenia Andyho Warhola, Medzilaborce, Poland
Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom
Berardo Collectie Museum, Lissabon, Portugal
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, USA.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA.
Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA
Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA
Leeum - Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea
M+, National Gallery of Art, Washington, USA
Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain
Louisiana Museum of Art, Humlebæk, Denmark
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), San Francisco, USA
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, USA
Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, USA
Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Barcelona, Spain
Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, USA
Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, USA
Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain
Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, USA
Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, USA
Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Chicago, USA
Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden

Selected Exhibitions

2016
Andy Warhol, Ai WeiWei, National Gallery of Victoria, Australia

2015
Andy Warhol, Campbell's Soup Cans and Other Works, 1953 -1967, MOMA, New York, USA
Transmitting Andy Warhol, Tate Liverpool, Liverpool, England

2007
Andy Warhol, Other Voices, Other Rooms, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

1990
Retrospective, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

Selected Literature

The Philosophy of Andy Warhol; from A to B and back again (1975)
Popism: The Warhol Sixties (1980)
The Andy Warhol Diaries (1989)
Andy Warhol's Exposures, Andy Warhol and Bob Colacello (1979)