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Andy Warhol (/ˈwɔːrhol/^[1] born **Andrew Warhola**; August 6, 1928 – February 22, 1987) was an American artist, director and producer who was a leading figure in the visual art movement known as pop art. His works explore the relationship between artistic expression, celebrity culture, and advertising that flourished by the 1960s, and span a variety of media, including painting, silkscreening, photography, film, and sculpture. Some of his best known works include the silkscreen paintings Campbell's Soup Cans (1962) and Marilyn Diptych (1962), the experimental film *Chelsea Girls* (1966), and the multimedia events known as the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable* (1966–67).

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Warhol initially pursued a successful career as a commercial illustrator. After exhibiting his work in several galleries in the late 1950s, he began to receive recognition as an influential and controversial artist. His New York studio, The Factory, became a well-known gathering place that brought together distinguished intellectuals, drag queens, playwrights, Bohemian street people, Hollywood celebrities, and wealthy patrons.^[2]^[3]^[4] He promoted a collection of personalities known as Warhol superstars, and is credited with coining the widely used expression "15 minutes of fame." In the late 1960s, he managed and produced the experimental rock band The Velvet Underground and founded *Interview* magazine. He authored numerous books, including *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol* and *Popism: The Warhol Sixties*. He lived openly as a gay man before the gay liberation movement. After gallbladder surgery, Warhol died of cardiac arrhythmia in February 1987 at the age of 58.

Warhol has been the subject of numerous retrospective exhibitions, books, and feature and documentary films. The Andy Warhol Museum in his native city of Pittsburgh, which holds an extensive permanent collection of art and archives, is the largest museum in the United States dedicated to a single artist. Many of his creations are very collectible and highly valuable. The highest price ever paid for a Warhol painting is US\$105 million for a 1963 canvas titled *Silver Car Crash (Double Disaster)*; his works include some of the most expensive paintings ever sold.^[5] A 2009 article in *The Economist* described Warhol as the "bellwether of the art market".

Warhol was born on August 6, 1928, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.^[7] He was the fourth child of Ondrej Warhola (Americanized as Andrew Warhola, Sr.,

1889–1942)[8][9][10] and Julia (*née* Zavacká, 1892–1972),[11] whose first child was born in their homeland and died before their move to the U.S.

His parents were working-class Lemko[12][13] emigrants from Mikó, Austria-Hungary (now called Miková, located in today's northeastern Slovakia). Warhol's father emigrated to the United States in 1914, and his mother joined him in 1921, after the death of Warhol's grandparents. Warhol's father worked in a coal mine. The family lived at 55 Beelen Street and later at 3252 Dawson Street in the Oakland neighborhood of Pittsburgh.[14] The family was Ruthenian Catholic and attended St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic Church. Andy Warhol had two older brothers—Pavol (Paul), the oldest, was born before the family emigrated; Ján was born in Pittsburgh. Pavol's son, James Warhola, became a successful children's book illustrator.

In third grade, Warhol had Sydenham's chorea (also known as St. Vitus' Dance), the nervous system disease that causes involuntary movements of the extremities, which is believed to be a complication of scarlet fever which causes skin pigmentation blotchiness.[15] At times when he was confined to bed, he drew, listened to the radio and collected pictures of movie stars around his bed. Warhol later described this period as very important in the development of his personality, skill-set and preferences. When Warhol was 13, his father died in an accident.[16]

As a teenager, Warhol graduated from Schenley High School in 1945. Also as a teen, Warhol won a Scholastic Art and Writing Award.[17] After graduating from high school, his intentions were to study art education at the University of Pittsburgh in the hope of becoming an art teacher, but his plans changed and he enrolled in the Carnegie Institute of Technology, now Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, where he studied commercial art. During his time there, Warhol joined the campus Modern Dance Club and Beaux Arts Society.[18] He also served as art director of the student art magazine, *Cano*, illustrating a cover in 1948[19] and a full-page interior illustration in 1949.[20] These are believed to be his first two published artworks.[20] Warhol earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in pictorial design in 1949.[21] Later that year, he moved to New York City and began a career in magazine illustration and advertising.

Warhol's early career was dedicated to commercial and advertising art, where his first commission had been to draw shoes for Glamour magazine in the late 1940s.[22] In the 1950s, Warhol worked as a designer for shoe manufacturer Israel Miller.[22][23] American photographer John Coplans recalled that

nobody drew shoes the way Andy did. He somehow gave each shoe a temperament of its own, a sort of sly, Toulouse-Lautrec kind of sophistication, but the shape and the style came through accurately and the buckle was always in the right place. The kids in the apartment [which Andy shared in New York – note by Coplans] noticed that the vamps on Andy's shoe drawings kept getting longer and longer but [Israel] Miller didn't mind. Miller loved them.

Warhol's "whimsical" ink drawings of shoe advertisements figured in some of his earliest showings at the Bodley Gallery in New York.

Warhol was an early adopter of the silk screen printmaking process as a technique for making paintings. A young Warhol was taught silk screen printmaking techniques by Max Arthur Cohn at his graphic arts business in Manhattan.[24] While working in the shoe industry, Warhol developed his "blotted line" technique, applying ink to paper and then blotting the ink while still wet, which was akin to a printmaking process on the most rudimentary scale. His use of tracing paper and ink allowed him to repeat the basic image and also to create endless variations on the theme, a method that prefigures his 1960s silk-screen canvas.[22] In his book *Popism: The Warhol Sixties*, Warhol writes: "When you do something exactly wrong, you always turn up something." [25]

Warhol habitually used the expedient of tracing photographs projected with an epidiascope.[26] Using prints by Edward Wallowitch, his 'first boyfriend'[27] the photographs would undergo a subtle transformation during Warhol's often cursory tracing of contours and hatching of shadows. Warhol used Wallowitch's photograph *Young Man Smoking a Cigarette* (c.1956),[28] for a 1958 design for a book cover he submitted to Simon and Schuster for the Walter Ross pulp novel *The Immortal*, and later used others for his dollar bill series,[29][30] and for *Big Campbell's Soup Can with Can Opener (Vegetable)*, of 1962 which initiated Warhol's most sustained motif, the soup can.

With the rapid expansion of the record industry, RCA Records hired Warhol, along with another freelance artist, Sid Maurer, to design album covers and promotional materials.

He began exhibiting his work during the 1950s. He held exhibitions at the Hugo Gallery[32] and the Bodley Gallery[33] in New York City; in California, his first West Coast gallery exhibition[34][35] was on July 9, 1962, in the Ferus Gallery of Los Angeles. The exhibition marked his West Coast debut of pop art.[36] Andy Warhol's first New York solo pop art exhibition was hosted at Eleanor Ward's Stable Gallery November 6–24, 1962. The exhibit included the works *Marilyn Diptych*, *100 Soup Cans*, *100 Coke Bottles*, and *100 Dollar Bills*. At the Stable Gallery exhibit, the artist met for the first time

poet John Giorno who would star in Warhol's first film, *Sleep*, in 1963.[37]

It was during the 1960s that Warhol began to make paintings of iconic American objects such as dollar bills, mushroom clouds, electric chairs, Campbell's Soup Cans, Coca-Cola bottles, celebrities such as Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Marlon Brando, Troy Donahue, Muhammad Ali, and Elizabeth Taylor, as well as newspaper headlines or photographs of police dogs attacking African-American protesters during the Birmingham campaign in the civil rights movement. During these years, he founded his studio, "The Factory" and gathered about him a wide range of artists, writers, musicians, and underground celebrities. His work became popular and controversial. Warhol had this to say about Coca-Cola:

What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You can be watching TV and see Coca-Cola, and you know that the President drinks Coca-Cola, Liz Taylor drinks Coca-Cola, and just think, you can drink Coca-Cola, too. A Coke is a Coke and no amount of money can get you a better Coke than the one the bum on the corner is drinking. All the Cokes are the same and all the Cokes are good. Liz Taylor knows it, the President knows it, the bum knows it, and you know it.[38]

New York City's Museum of Modern Art hosted a Symposium on pop art in December 1962 during which artists such as Warhol were attacked for "capitulating" to consumerism. Critics were scandalized by Warhol's open embrace of market culture. This symposium set the tone for Warhol's reception.

A pivotal event was the 1964 exhibit *The American Supermarket*, a show held in Paul Bianchini's Upper East Side gallery. The show was presented as a typical U.S. small supermarket environment, except that everything in it—from the produce, canned goods, meat, posters on the wall, etc.—was created by six prominent pop artists of the time, among them the controversial (and like-minded) Billy Apple, Mary Inman, and Robert Watts. Warhol's painting of a can of Campbell's soup cost \$1,500 while each autographed can sold for \$6. The exhibit was one of the first mass events that directly confronted the general public with both pop art and the perennial question of what art is. As an advertisement illustrator in the 1950s, Warhol used assistants to increase his productivity. Collaboration would remain a defining (and controversial) aspect of his working methods throughout his career; this was particularly true in the 1960s. One of the most important collaborators during this period was Gerard Malanga. Malanga assisted the artist with the production of silkscreens, films, sculpture, and other works at "The Factory", Warhol's aluminum foil-and-silver-paint-lined studio on 47th Street (later

moved to Broadway). Other members of Warhol's Factory crowd included Freddie Herko, Ondine, Ronald Tavel, Mary Woronov, Billy Name, and Brigid Berlin (from whom he apparently got the idea to tape-record his phone conversations).[39]

During the 1960s, Warhol also groomed a retinue of bohemian and counterculture eccentrics upon whom he bestowed the designation "Superstars", including Nico, Joe Dallesandro, Edie Sedgwick, Viva, Ultra Violet, Holly Woodlawn, Jackie Curtis, and Candy Darling. These people all participated in the Factory films, and some—like Berlin—remained friends with Warhol until his death. Important figures in the New York underground art/cinema world, such as writer John Giorno and film-maker Jack Smith, also appear in Warhol films (many premiering at the New Andy Warhol Garrick Theatre and 55th Street Playhouse) of the 1960s, revealing Warhol's connections to a diverse range of artistic scenes during this time. Less well known was his support and collaboration with several teen-agers during this era, who would achieve prominence later in life including writer David Dalton,[40] photographer Stephen Shore[41] and artist Bibbe Hansen (mother of pop musician Beck).

On June 3, 1968, radical feminist writer Valerie Solanas shot Warhol and Mario Amaya, art critic and curator, at Warhol's studio.[43] Before the shooting, Solanas had been a marginal figure in the Factory scene. She authored in 1967 the S.C.U.M. Manifesto,[44] a separatist feminist tract that advocated the elimination of men; and appeared in the 1968 Warhol film *I, a Man*. Earlier on the day of the attack, Solanas had been turned away from the Factory after asking for the return of a script she had given to Warhol. The script had apparently been misplaced.[45]

Amaya received only minor injuries and was released from the hospital later the same day. Warhol was seriously wounded by the attack and barely survived: surgeons opened his chest and massaged his heart to help stimulate its movement again. He suffered physical effects for the rest of his life, including being required to wear a surgical corset.[15] The shooting had a profound effect on Warhol's life and art.[46][47]

Solanas was arrested the day after the assault, after turning herself in to police. By way of explanation, she said that Warhol "had too much control over my life." She was subsequently diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and eventually sentenced to three years under the control of the Department of Corrections. After the shooting, the Factory scene heavily increased security, and for many the "Factory 60s" ended.[47]

Warhol had this to say about the attack: "Before I was shot, I always thought that I was more half-there than all-there—I always suspected that I was watching TV instead of

living life. People sometimes say that the way things happen in movies is unreal, but actually it's the way things happen in life that's unreal. The movies make emotions look so strong and real, whereas when things really do happen to you, it's like watching television—you don't feel anything. Right when I was being shot and ever since, I knew that I was watching television. The channels switch, but it's all television.

Paintings

By the beginning of the 1960s, pop art was an experimental form that several artists were independently adopting; some of these pioneers, such as Roy Lichtenstein, would later become synonymous with the movement. Warhol, who would become famous as the "Pope of Pop", turned to this new style, where popular subjects could be part of the artist's palette. His early paintings show images taken from cartoons and advertisements, hand-painted with paint drips. Marilyn Monroe was a pop art painting that Warhol had done and it was very popular. Those drips emulated the style of successful abstract expressionists (such as Willem de Kooning). Warhol's first pop art paintings were displayed in April 1961, serving as the backdrop for New York Department Store Bronwitt Teller's window display. This was the same stage his Pop Art contemporaries Jasper Johns, James Rosenquist and Robert Rauschenberg had also once graced

It was the gallerist Muriel Latow who came up with the ideas for both the soup cans and Warhol's dollar paintings. On November 23, 1961, Warhol wrote Latow a check for \$50 which, according to the 2009 Warhol biography, *Pop, The Genius of Warhol*, was payment for coming up with the idea of the soup cans as subject matter.[67] For his first major exhibition, Warhol painted his famous cans of Campbell's soup, which he claimed to have had for lunch for most of his life. A 1964 *Large Campbell's Soup Can* was sold in a 2007 Sotheby's auction to a South American collector for £5.1 million (\$7.4 million).[68]

He loved celebrities, so he painted them as well. From these beginnings he developed his later style and subjects. Instead of working on a signature subject matter, as he started out to do, he worked more and more on a signature style, slowly eliminating the handmade from the artistic process. Warhol frequently used silk-screening; his later drawings were traced from slide projections. At the height of his fame as a painter, Warhol had several assistants who produced his silk-screen multiples, following his directions to make different versions and variations.[69]

In 1979, Warhol was commissioned by BMW to paint a Group-4 race version of the then "elite supercar" BMW M1 for the fourth installment in the BMW Art Car Project. It was reported at the time that, unlike the three artists before him, Warhol opted to paint

directly onto the automobile himself instead of letting technicians transfer his scale-model design to the car.[70] It was indicated that Warhol spent only a total of 23 minutes to paint the entire car.[71]

Warhol produced both comic and serious works; his subject could be a soup can or an electric chair. Warhol used the same techniques—silkscreens, reproduced serially, and often painted with bright colors—whether he painted celebrities, everyday objects, or images of suicide, car crashes, and disasters, as in the 1962-63 *Death and Disaster* series. The *Death and Disaster* paintings included *Red Car Crash*, *Purple Jumping Man*, and *Orange Disaster*. One of these paintings, the diptych *Silver Car Crash*, became the highest priced work of his when it sold at Sotheby's Contemporary Art Auction on Wednesday, November 13, 2013, for \$105.4 million.[72]

Some of Warhol's work, as well as his own personality, has been described as being Keatonesque. Warhol has been described as playing dumb to the media. He sometimes refused to explain his work. He has suggested that all one needs to know about his work is "already there 'on the surface'."[73]

His Rorschach inkblots are intended as pop comments on art and what art could be. His cow wallpaper (literally, wallpaper with a cow motif) and his oxidation paintings (canvases prepared with copper paint that was then oxidized with urine) are also noteworthy in this context. Equally noteworthy is the way these works—and their means of production—mirrored the atmosphere at Andy's New York "Factory". Biographer Bob Colacello provides some details on Andy's "piss paintings":

Victor ... was Andy's ghost pisser on the Oxidations. He would come to the Factory to urinate on canvases that had already been primed with copper-based paint by Andy or Ronnie Cutrone, a second ghost pisser much appreciated by Andy, who said that the vitamin B that Ronnie took made a prettier color when the acid in the urine turned the copper green. Did Andy ever use his own urine? My diary shows that when he first began the series, in December 1977, he did, and there were many others: boys who'd come to lunch and drink too much wine, and find it funny or even flattering to be asked to help Andy 'paint'. Andy always had a little extra bounce in his walk as he led them to his studio.[74]

Warhol's first portrait of *Basquiat* (1982) is a black photo-silkscreen over an oxidized copper "piss painting".

After many years of silkscreen, oxidation, photography, etc., Warhol returned to painting with a brush in hand in a series of more than 50 large collaborative works done with Jean-

Michel Basquiat between 1984 and 1986.[75][76] Despite negative criticism when these were first shown, Warhol called some of them "masterpieces," and they were influential for his later work.[77]

Andy Warhol was commissioned in 1984 by collector and gallerist Alexander Iolas to produce work based on Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* for an exhibition at the old refectory of the Palazzo delle Stelline in Milan, opposite from the Santa Maria delle Grazie where Leonardo da Vinci's mural can be seen.[78] Warhol exceeded the demands of the commission and produced nearly 100 variations on the theme, mostly silkscreens and paintings, and among them a collaborative sculpture with Basquiat, the *Ten Punching Bags (Last Supper)*. [79] The Milan exhibition that opened in January 1987 with a set of 22 silk-screens, was the last exhibition for both the artist and the gallerist.[80] The series of *The Last Supper* was seen by some as "arguably his greatest,"[81] but by others as "wishy-washy, religiose" and "spiritless." [82] It is the largest series of religious-themed works by any U.S. artist.[81]

Artist Maurizio Cattelan describes that it is difficult to separate daily encounters from the art of Andy Warhol: "That's probably the greatest thing about Warhol: the way he penetrated and summarized our world, to the point that distinguishing between him and our everyday life is basically impossible, and in any case useless." Warhol was an inspiration towards Cattelan's magazine and photography compilations, such as *Permanent Food*, *Charley*, and *Toilet Paper*. [83]

In the period just before his death, Warhol was working on *Cars*, a series of paintings for Mercedes-Benz.[84]

A self-portrait by Andy Warhol (1963–64), which sold in New York at the May Post-War and Contemporary evening sale in Christie's, fetched \$38.4 million.[85]

On May 9, 2012, his classic painting *Double Elvis (Ferus Type)* sold at auction at Sotheby's in New York for US\$33 million. With commission, the sale price totaled US\$37,042,500, short of the \$50 million that Sotheby's had predicted the painting might bring. The piece (silkscreen ink and spray paint on canvas) shows Elvis Presley in a gunslinger pose. It was first exhibited in 1963 at the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles. Warhol made 22 versions of the *Double Elvis*, nine of which are held in museums.[86]

In November 2013, his *Silver Car Crash (Double Disaster)* diptych sold at Sotheby's Contemporary Art Auction for \$105.4 million, a new record for the pop artist (pre-auction estimates were at \$80 million).[72] Created in 1963, this work had rarely been seen in public in the previous years.[87] In November 2014, *Triple Elvis* sold for \$81.9m (£51.9m)

at an auction in New York.