

NEWS

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ANDY WARHOL'S FIRST SILKSCREEN PAINTINGS OF HOLLYWOOD STARS FEATURED AT WALKER ART CENTER

WARHOL'S SILKSCREEN PAINTINGS REFLECT AMERICA'S OBSESSION WITH CELEBRITY AND TRAGEDY



Andy Warhol, *16 Jackies*, 1964
acrylic and silkscreen ink on linen
80 x 64 in. (203.2 x 162.6 cm)
Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis;
Art Center Acquisition Fund, 1968
Photograph courtesy of Walker Art Center
©2005 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual
Arts/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Minneapolis, October 14, 2005— From Civil Rights marchers attacked by police dogs on the pages of *LIFE* Magazine to footage of Vietnam, to the Zapruder film of John F. Kennedy's assassination to the iconic face of Marilyn Monroe, the early sixties were a time of mediated mayhem. Tabloid headlines and nightly news reports presented images that would have existed a decade earlier only in the imagination. At this same time, Andy Warhol made a pivotal shift that reflected this mass production of arresting images—from handmade painting to work created through the new mechanical process of photo-silkscreening. **ANDY WARHOL/SUPERNOVA: Stars, Deaths, and Disasters, 1962–1964**, the first solo exhibition of the artist's work organized by the Walker Art Center, brings together 26 paintings that, befitting the early 1960s, feature images of both tragic celebrity (Marilyn Monroe and the widowed Jackie Kennedy) and everyday disasters and tragedies (car wrecks, electric chairs, and murderers). Premiering at the Walker November 13–February 26, the exhibition will travel to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago and the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto. A Preview Party from 9 pm–midnight on Saturday, November 12, features the music of Edie Sedgwick, a film screening, and appetizers by Wolfgang Puck.

Considered one of the most influential artists of the second half of the 20th century, Warhol was intimately involved in the early genesis of Pop Art in New York, creating a body of work spanning three decades that addressed American culture's unequalled fascination with celebrity and the tragedy of anonymous "disasters" in a world defined by the increasingly voracious and virulent expansion of popular mass media. He was one of the first American artists to investigate this cultural morbid obsession with



Andy Warhol, *Most Wanted Men No. 2, John Victor G.*, 1964
 silkscreen ink on linen
 48 1/2 x 38 5/8 in. front view panel
 48 1/2 x 38 5/8 in. side view panel
 Daros Collection, Switzerland
 ©2005 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

violence, tragedy, and death in a body of silkscreen paintings that drew their source materials from the magazines, films, and tabloids of American pop and filtered them through a painterly technique that employed photographic silkscreen reproduction. Warhol's early use of this technique established his revolutionary contribution to both art history and contemporary art.

Warhol's fascination with Marilyn Monroe began just after her suicide on August 5, 1962, at the same time that he began making silkscreen paintings. His numerous impressions of Marilyn rendered in single and multiple formats, derived from an iconic black-and-white publicity image of the movie star, were, according to the artist, related to the theme of death. As he suggested in *ARTnews* magazine in November 1963, "I guess it was the big plane crash picture, the front page of a newspaper; 129 DIE. I was also painting Marylins. I realized that everything I was doing must have been Death." On view in the exhibition will be *Marilyn Diptych* (1962), from the collection of Tate Modern, London, composed of 50 silkscreen repetitions of Monroe's publicity still rendered in garish, oversaturated colors or in black-and-white. Joining this signature masterpiece will be the Hirshhorn Museum's *Marilyn's Lips* (1962), a massive canvas that isolates Monroe's evocative lips and reproduces them 162 times, once again in color and black-and-white. Warhol's repetition of these images is as much an homage to a recently fallen American icon as a reflection of the rapaciousness of both Hollywood and the media in creating, consuming, and discarding its subjects.



Andy Warhol, *Elvis I and II* [*Elvis Diptych I and II*], 1963
 silkscreen ink and spray paint on linen (silver canvas);
 silkscreen ink and acrylic on linen (blue canvas)
 82 x 82 in. (208.3 x 208.3) each
 Art Gallery of Ontario. Gift from the Women's
 Committee Fund
 Photograph courtesy of Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto
 ©2005 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual
 Arts/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

The exhibition moves from Warhol's images of then-contemporary celebrities Elizabeth Taylor (*National Velvet*, 1963, and *Blue Liz as Cleopatra*, 1962), Elvis Presley (*Elvis I and II*, 1963), Jackie Kennedy (*16 Jackies*, 1964), or interestingly even crime figures from the FBI's Most Wanted list, into an image world defined by the tragic consequences of both random and state-sponsored violence. In Warhol's monumental monochromatic repetitions of car crashes such as his *Green Disaster #2* (1963), *Orange Car Crash* (1963), or the black-and-white *Saturday Disaster* (1964), the artist appropriates, enlarges, multiplies, and transfers news photographs of terrible car wrecks. These anonymous, frequent, and all too ordinary car crashes, offer up a portrait of a culture defined by what the critic Peter Schjeldahl once referred to in these paintings as "images of plebeian catastrophes." Rendered in multiple colors and in black-and-white, these works are everyday reminders of our cultural obsession with tragedy and death.

Taking on the quality of the *memento mori* prevalent in Renaissance paintings, Warhol's car crashes are joined in the exhibition by another group of "disasters" in the form of his series of electric chair paintings and his tuna fish disasters. In a wide range of paintings including *Lavender Disaster* (1963), Warhol repeats a single solemn image of an empty electric chair. Repeated 15 times on a bright lavender canvas, the sobriety of this found image contrasts sharply with its status as the definitive marker of the failure of the social contract. As in so many of these works,



Andy Warhol, *Tunafish Disaster*, 1963
 silkscreen ink and silver paint on linen
 124-1/2 x 83 in. (316.2 x 210.8 cm)
 Daros Collection, Switzerland
 Photograph courtesy Daros Collection
 ©2005 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual
 Arts/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Warhol transforms this mute photograph through its multiplication and its translation into garish colors. Unlike his other works from this period, the electric chairs are tragedies waiting to happen and a sign of the banality of death in a culture that defines itself through its portrayal in the mass media. But tragedy comes in many forms and sometimes it is the sanitized and prepackaged world of consumer products that turns on us to provoke another kind of disaster. Warhol's *Tunafish Disaster* (1963), which appropriates images from a *Newsweek* article, takes as its subject the deaths of a number of people from tainted cans of commercial tuna fish. Here the glossy, hermetically sealed world of everyday mass-produced commodities that forms Pop art's field of dreams comes back to haunt us as consumption leads to tragic death.

Because of his oft-quoted statements such as "I want to be a machine," Warhol was often taken for, at best, a dispassionate and at worst a cynical commentator on his chosen subjects. There is, however, something incredibly human and sympathetic about these images in contrast to the now commonplace and somewhat clichéd interpretation of his paintings as being disengaged from the world. This humanistic aspect of his work becomes clear in Warhol's picture of Jacqueline Kennedy, *16 Jackies* (1964), which entered the Walker Art Center's collection in 1968. It is with *16 Jackies* that the exhibition comes full circle back to the interplay of celebrity and tragedy that defined Warhol's images of Marilyn Monroe. His near obsession with press photos of Jackie before and just after the assassination of her husband, President John F. Kennedy, in 1963 resulted in a large body of paintings devoted to these photographs. In these works, the artist at once enshrines Jackie as a tragic widow while at the same time invokes the end of a hope-filled period of youthful exuberance that would come to define the "Camelot" image of Kennedy's presidency. When taken together with his "race riot" paintings such as *Pink Race Riot* (1963), which derive their source material from a newspaper photograph of police dogs attacking civil rights protestors in Birmingham, Alabama, Warhol's paintings from this period start to take on the character of history paintings that illustrate the end of what Henry Luce once called "the American century." While Warhol once suggested that he was not a political artist, stating, "I feel that I represent the United States in my art but I'm not a social critic," these works have a sensibility in them akin to that of Francisco de Goya's "Disasters of War" etchings illustrating the incredible brutality of the Napoleonic invasion of Spain at the beginning of the 19th century. In looking back at Warhol's disasters—whether they depict the tragic consequences of consumer culture in the form of car crashes or more obliquely address the state of the world by looking at our culture's obsessive production and consumption of celebrity—it becomes clear that little has changed in American culture and that these masterpieces are as radical and relevant today as they were in 1964.

The Walker was among the first American museums to collect Warhol's work, which has been included in nine exhibitions since 1967. *Andy Warhol Drawings: 1942–1987*, organized by the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, and Kunstmuseum Basel, traveled to the Walker in 1999.

ANDY WARHOL/SUPERNOVA: Stars, Deaths, and Disasters, 1962-1964 is accompanied by a richly illustrated 144-page catalogue featuring some 50 color plates of major paintings by Warhol and essays by exhibition curator Douglas Fogle; Francesco Bonami, Manilow Senior Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art; and David Moos, Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario, addressing a variety of themes found in the artist's work with a special emphasis on his connection to American art history and popular culture. The catalogue, available in November, will be distributed by D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, Inc., 155 Sixth Avenue, Second Floor, New York, NY 10013, 800.338.2665 (phone), 212.627.9484 (fax), and will be available at the Walker Art Center Shop, 612.375.7638 (phone), 612.375.7565 (fax). \$39.95 (\$35.96 Walker members)

Related Events

Preview Party



Edie Sedgwick
Photo courtesy the artist

Saturday, November 12, 9 pm–12 midnight

\$30 (\$15 Walker members)

Save \$1 per ticket when ordering online.

New members joining for the event receive one free ticket.

612.375.7600 or visit walkerart.org/tickets

Be the first to see the exhibition before it opens to the public at this "sensational" event featuring the music of Edie Sedgwick in the Gallery 8 Café and a screening of *Kiss* in the Cinema. Enjoy cash bars and complimentary appetizers throughout the evening.

Music: Edie Sedgwick

10:30–11:45 pm, Gallery 8 Café

Experience celebrity culture through the music of Justin Moyer as Edie Sedgwick.

Screening: *Kiss*

Directed by Andy Warhol

9 pm–12 midnight running continuously, Cinema

This silent film of surprising serenity and tenderness features long takes of couples kissing. 1963, U.S., BW, 16mm, 58 minutes.

Preview Party is sponsored by Target.

Community Forum



Andy Warhol, *Five Deaths on Yellow*, 1963
acrylic and silkscreen ink on linen
30 1/8 x 30 1/8 in.
The Sonnabend Collection, New York
©2005 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts/Artists
Rights Society (ARS), New York

Sunday, February 12, 3 pm, Free

The Spectacle of Death: The Role of Disaster and Tragedy in Shaping Community

Cinema

Andy Warhol is best known for his images of celebrities and his fascination with commodities and celebrity, but he was equally concerned with death, destruction, and the collapse of society. How does the treatment of death and disaster in Warhol's work foreshadow and comment on the almost banal multiplication of tragic images in today's media environment—from the daily rush-hour accident report to 24-hour coverage of the latest environmental disaster or killer storm? How does disaster and tragedy generate symbols, ideas, and belief sets that come to define communities, nations, and cultures? This community forum will utilize Warhol's Death and Disaster series as a springboard for a discussion of how disasters, both natural and man-made, shape culture.

This program is presented as part of the Walker's civic engagement initiative to encourage dialogue around topics of importance to the Twin Cities community.

Target Free Thursday Nights



Sarah Vowell
Photo courtesy the artist

Thursday, December 1, 7 pm

The Artist's Bookshelf

Participation is free, but space is limited and reservations are required. Call 612.375.7600.

Andy Warhol was one of the first American artists to investigate our cultural obsession with celebrity and disaster. Sarah Vowell also takes up this task in December's book club selection. Part travelogue, part history lesson, and part self-deprecating stand-up comedy routine, *Assassination Vacation* documents the author's pilgrimage to various assassination sites in the United States. But beneath its hip veneer, the book delves deeply into America's fascination with violence and stardom.

Find this book in the Walker Shop, The Friends of MPL Bookstore, or check out a copy at a Minneapolis Public Library (www.mpl.org).

Presented in partnership with The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library.

Thursdays, January 5, 12, 19, 26, 6–9 pm

Art Lab: Just Like Andy

Star Tribune Foundation Art Lab

In the 1960s Andy Warhol used the daily newspaper to find images of current events and superstars for his silkscreened and printed artworks. Flip through the local paper and glossy gossip magazines to clip your own images of divas and disasters to use in creating a work of art à la Andy. Led by artist Suzanne Lindgren.

Target Free Thursday Nights are made possible by Target.

Films



Still from *Blow Job*, directed by Andy Warhol, 1963

January 15-26

Andy Warhol: Factory Films

Inspired by the underground films of Jack Smith, Ron Rice, and Taylor Mead in 1963, Warhol's first experiments in cinema dealt with prolonged duration and tested the endurance of viewers by celebrating ordinary action: i.e., sleeping, kissing, eating. Bordering on surveillance—mixed with a sense of voyeurism—the first film portraits were shot in 16mm without sound, using a static camera.

As Warhol's technical skills improved he began to emulate Hollywood, both in film language and in creating his own studio system. He developed a stable of stars among the artists, socialites, and hustlers who hung out at his Factory studio. He often placed his actors directly in front of the camera and let the camera roll through a full magazine of film while they improvised on a theme. The results are at times hilarious, inspired, tedious, and audacious.

All films are directed by Andy Warhol and unless otherwise noted will be screened in the Lecture Room. Except where noted all screenings are \$8 (\$6).

Sunday, January 15, 3 pm

Sleep

Warhol framed this intimate static shot of somnambulist John Giorno as if he's gazing at his lover sharing the bed. Warhol shot nearly a thousand rolls of three-minute film over a month, but chose to loop together only a select few of the best shots. This short excerpt gives an example of the nearly six-hour complete version. 1963, U.S., BW, 16mm, silent, 42-minute excerpt of 5 hour, 21 minute film.

with

Kiss

In opposition to early Hayes Office mandates forbidding on-screen kisses in Hollywood films to last more than three seconds, Warhol's pairings—including some same-sex couples—last three minutes each. Warhol shot the film with Naomi Levine, Jane Holzer, Gerard Malanga, Marisol, and others in imposing close-ups. 1963, U.S., BW, 16mm, silent, 58 minutes.

Thursday, January 19, 7:30 pm FREE

Haircut (No. 1)

Incorporating multiple camera angles, Warhol shot the gay shirtless men James Waring, Billy Name, John Daley, and Freddy Herko receiving haircuts at Waring's loft. The intimacy of the action is heightened by the overlapping shots and lighting by Name. 1963, U.S., BW, 16mm, silent, 33 minutes.

with

Couch

The giant red couch that was the gathering point of the 47th Street Factory, which Warhol moved into in January 1963, serves as the set for this series of improvised sexual adventures. With Gerard Malanga, Allen Ginsberg, Amy Taubin, Ondine, and other rising factory "superstars." Madonna made an homage to the banana-eating sequence of the film in her *Deeper & Deeper* video. 1964, U.S., BW, 16mm, silent, 40 minutes.

Sunday, January 22, 3 pm

Harlot

Cinema

Warhol's first sound film and first starring a drag queen, featured Mario Montez who had appeared in the underground films of Jack Smith, Ron Rice, and Helio Oiticica, in the title role with off-camera dialogue by Ronnie Tavel. Like the women in *Couch*, Montez also devours a mountain of bananas as the action plays around her. Tavel later developed scenarios for many of Warhol's later films that were improvised for the most part by the actors. 1964, U.S., BW, 16mm, 70 minutes.

Thursday, January 26, 7:30 pm

Blow Job

Viewed as a pioneering homoerotic work even though only the recipient of the implied sex act is seen, Whitney Museum of American Art curator Callie Angell describes it as "a nearly perfect piece of pornographic wit." The camera never leaves the face and upper torso of the actor DeVern Bookwalter leaving

only the title and the his facial gestures to imply the action.
1963, U.S., BW, 16mm, silent, 35 minutes.

with

Eat

In this later epicurean portrait film, Warhol plays off the themes of painter and sculptor Robert Indiana's "Eat" pieces from earlier in the decade. Shot in slow motion with a camera finally stabilized on a tripod with a mixture of looping and freeze frames added in the editing, Indiana lethargically nibbles at a mushroom. 1963, U.S., BW, 16mm, silent, 39 minutes.

Free First Saturdays

Pop-mart

Saturday, December 3, 10 am–5 pm, Free

Story Reading: *A Visit from St. Alphabet* by Dave Morice
10:30 and 11:30 am, 2 pm

St. Alphabet and his miniature A and eight tiny B's make a special guest appearance at Free First Saturday. Listen to this charming rhyme read by the author.

Art-Making for the Entire Family: *Play With Your Food!*, 11 am–4 pm

Join Chefs Andrew Zimmern and Michelle Gayer Nicholson in the Star Tribune Foundation Art Lab where they will show families how to prepare some easy and tasty treats together at home.

Family Gallery Tour: *Pop Stars*, 12 noon and 2 pm

Discover works of art inspired by Pop culture in the Walker's collection and in the exhibition.

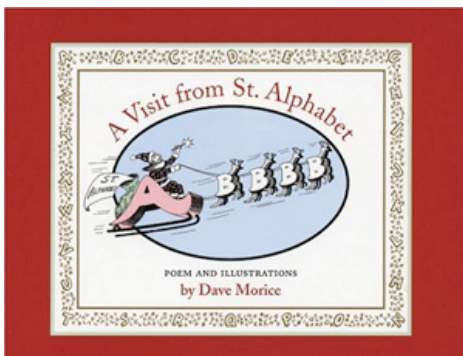
Chowhounds! Live!, 1–3 pm

Listen to a live broadcast of FM 107's food talk show *Chowhounds!* from the Walker's Bazinet Garden Lobby. Host Andrew Zimmern talks with kids and Walker staff about the joys of food and art.

Film: *Food Flicks*, 1 and 3 pm

Check out a series of film shorts sure to tempt your tummy.

Free First Saturdays are made possible by Coldwell Banker Burnet, Medtronic Foundation, and WCCO-TV.



Cover of *A Visit from St. Alphabet* by Dave Morice

Gallery Tours



Andy Warhol, *Blue Liz as Cleopatra*, 1962
acrylic, silkscreen ink, and pencil on linen
82 1/4 x 65 in.
Daros Collection, Switzerland
©2005 Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts/Artists
Rights Society (ARS), New York

Saturday, November 19
12 noon, Free with gallery admission

Sunday, November 20
12 noon, Free with gallery admission

Thursday, December 1
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Saturday, December 3
12 noon, Free

Sunday, December 4
12 noon, Free with gallery admission

Friday, December 9
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Friday, December 16
6 pm, Free with gallery admission

Friday, December 23
6 pm, Free with gallery admission

Thursday, January 5
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Saturday, January 14
12 noon, Free with gallery admission

Thursday, January 19
6 pm, Free

Sunday, January 22
12 noon, Free with gallery admission

Thursday, January 26
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Friday, January 27
6 pm, Free with gallery admission

Thursday, February 2
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Sunday, February 5
12 noon, Free with gallery admission

Friday, February 10
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Thursday, February 16
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Friday, February 17
6 pm, Free with gallery admission

Thursday, February 23
1 pm, Free with gallery admission

Exhibition Tour

Walker Art Center
November 13, 2005–February 26, 2006

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
March 18–June 18, 2006

Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto
July 8–October 1, 2006

Exhibition and National Tour of *ANDY WARHOL/SUPERNOVA: Stars, Deaths, and Disasters, 1962-1964* are sponsored by Northern Trust.

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The Walker Art Center is located at 1750 Hennepin Avenue—where Hennepin meets Lyndale—one block off Highways I-94 and I-394, Minneapolis.

For public information, call 612.375.7600, or visit walkerart.org.