

## KANTOR GALLERY

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ture exhibit (at Leo Castelli Gallery). He fattened up his lines and recruited his jumping, dancing figures in painted aluminum. He went on to create more than 100 unique motifs in various sculptural forms before his untimely death from AIDS in 1990. These sculptural figures became marvels of three-dimensional animation as they gleefully interacted with space.

Maquettes of Haring's sculpture range from the whimsical *Untitled* (*Figure on a Baby*) (1987), to the lively *Untitled* (*Two Figures Dancing*) (1987). All reflect his vital interest in positive and negative space, as is evident in his drawings. The pair of yellow and red dancers thrust their legs into space with great elan, seemingly ready to step off of the pedestal.

*Untitled* (*S-Man*) (1987), in brilliant blue, is only one of the many large-scale works created to float in various urban sites. Haring pared down the figure to focus on its carved arms, which flow in and out of space. Like giant pop-up images, these figures take on an enchanted life on their own as they engage in their own internal games.

Because of Haring's acknowledged commercial popularity, it is sometimes difficult to separate his artistic vision from the trappings of mass appeal. This thoughtful collection of drawings, paintings, and sculpture reveals the depth of this artist's exceptional talent, and makes the argument that Haring was able to move easily between fluid drawings and playful sculptures.

Kathy Zimmerman

**ANDY WARHOL**

(Kantor Gallery, West Hollywood)  
The transformation of the image of the ordinary into the extraordinary remain Andy Warhol's great contribution to the visual arts of our time. More than any of his contemporaries, Warhol transformed what the eye had bypassed as insignificant into its opposite, the icon. The banality of the ordinary became the tool, better yet, the sign

that he utilized to create a new dialectic between subject and object. And subject (the image of the self, of the person) through the apertures of perception and awareness, instigated by the creator, the market, and the mass audience, became object. These are the images which confront the viewer in this exhibition, which focuses on portrait images Warhol created from the 1950s to the '80s.

Warhol's obsession with the thing, the objects that surround us, undoubtedly originated in Marcel Duchamp's mind-opening experimentation with the object-as-subject. In the reiteration of the Campbell's soup can or the Brillo box, for Warhol, were no longer the object themselves but representations. Duchamp decontextualized the object from its familiar space and purpose in order to change our grasp of it and turn it into a subject of discourse. Warhol's point of departure is Duchamp's familiar and controversial play on the *Mona Lisa*, *L.H.O.O.Q.* That Warhol understood the challenge of the ready-made, touched by the hand of the artist, along with the irony of the reproduction and its ultimate substitution for the 'real thing' is obvious. His artistic objective could be described as an affirmation, a validation of Duchamp's confrontation with the concept of the thing, the object-icon-subject.

A Renaissance phenomenon, the portrait appears early in Warhol's career. An artifact that records sen-

siance, it literally embodies representation. Mimesis: Image or description made real, in this sense, the human face or body. Recognition and immortality. These are the two keys to this art which continue up to the present despite the advent of photography (with customary insight, Walter Benjamin alludes to the miraculous virtues of photography is that the consumer now achieves the right to his/her self-image via the camera).

Warhol's discovery will be exploitation (some might argue, exploitation) of the meaning and the concept of the portrait. The icon image reproduced in a repetitious series that attracts, dazzles and finally absorbs the eye originates with a photograph before its transformation through the silk-screen process.

"Mass marketing of art!" decried the purists. Yet while much has been made of Warhol's early beginnings in advertising during the fifties, his early drawings of that period, such as an *Untitled* (c. 1956-58) portrait of a young man, simultaneously reveal his masterful economy of line as well as an indefinable sense of elegance. The forward thrust of the body, the delicacy of the face and hair, the references to the formal clothing, all are seemingly a fashion magazine cliché. The strange vulnerability of this figure's posture is also reminiscent of David Hockney's drawings from the

same period. This same sensibility pervades at least two other works of the period. *Charles Loomis* (c. 1956) is a portrait of a young man in profile contemplating a pear; *Unlabeled Male* (c. 1957) is a portrait of a bare-chested man looking away from the viewer. Warhol had begun to discover portraiture as a representation that veered toward the ideal. In part because of Warhol, today this has come to mean the Celebrity.

By 1959-1960 Warhol had begun painting seriously and incorporating photography and silk-screen into his oeuvre (one of the first steps had been the use of the newspaper photograph). As Hockney pointed out to Henry Geldzahler, there was no difference whatsoever between Warhol's painting and printmaking save for the material used to support the image. The same screens are used on both canvas and paper. Black and white first, then color. The proper medium had been found for the image.

In the fifties Warhol had done a series of celebrity shoe drawings. His first known celebrity portrait subject was the boyishly handsome actor Troy Donahue, reproduced in multiples of oval-shaped images that call up associations with locket portraits. His first major success followed with the Marilyn portraits, an actress and woman whose image embodied the sexual fantasy and ideal of at least two generations.

What follows has become the subject of public domain. Can we imagine Jackie without first visualizing her in the famous pink suit, as the mourning widow, the hair, the smile? Or Liza Minnelli exemplifying the glamour of Blackgama mask? But alongside them: Mao Tse Tung, Wayne Gretzky, Muhammad Ali. For finally, you could also commission your fifteen minutes of fame. Since Warhol's image in itself transformed the image into icon, beyond the celebrity objects who became his subjects, others could commission their portrait much in the manner of the Renaissance patron-of-the-arts. His greatest exercise, in the end, might have been his own self-image, traceable through at least two works of 1967 and 1979. They are relexivity in that they go



Andy Warhol, 'Untitled (Portrait),' ink on paper, 17 x 14, c. 1956-58



Andy Warhol, 'Untitled (Superman),' graphite on HMP paper, 42 1/4 x 30 3/8, 1967

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