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Warhol (Blum)
Did all his good work between 1962 and 1967 - nobody thinks much of the recent portraits. His real contribution is his handling of the media, his public presence, and that's sociology not art.

[illegible] painting this way is because I want to be a machine. Whatever I do, and I do machinelike, is because, it is what I want to do. I think it would be terrific if everybody was alike.

"I like boring things.

"I hate objects.

"All is pretty.

"All my films are artificial, but then everything is sort of artificial. I don't know where the artificial stops and the real starts. The artificial fascinates me, the bright and shiny.

"My paintings never turn out the way I expect them to but I'm never surprised.

"I never read, I just look at pictures.

"...we have cops coming up here all the time. They think we're doing awful things and we aren't.

(re movies): "The lighting is bad, the camera work is bad, the projection is bad, but the people are beautiful.

"People are so fantastic. You can't take a bad picture.

"In the future everybody will be world famous for fifteen minutes.

"If you want to know all about Andy Warhol, just look at the surface of my paintings and films and me, and there I am. There's nothing behind it."

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Warhol - interview statements from Stockholm catalog

"I'm not more intelligent than I appear...

"I don't want to get too involved in other people's lives... I don't want to get too close...I don't like to touch things...that's why my work is sort distant from myself..."

"and I don't really believe in love.

"Machines have les s problems. I'd like to be a machine, wouldn't you?

"The reason I'm painting this way is because I want to be a machine. Whatever I do, and I do machinelike, is because, it is what I want to do. I think it would be terrific if everybody was alike.

"I like boring things.

"I hate objects.

"All is pretty.

"All my films are artificial, but then everything is sort of artificial. I don't know where the artificial stops and the real starts. The artificial fascinates me, the bright and shiny.

"My paintings never turn out the way I expect them to but I'm never surprised.

"I never read, I just look at pictures.

"...we have cops coming up here all the time. They think we're doing awful things and we aren't.

(re movies): "The lighting is bad, the camera work is bad, the projection is bad, but the people are beautiful.

"People are so fantastic. You can't take a bad picture.

"In the future everybody will be world famous for fifteen minutes.

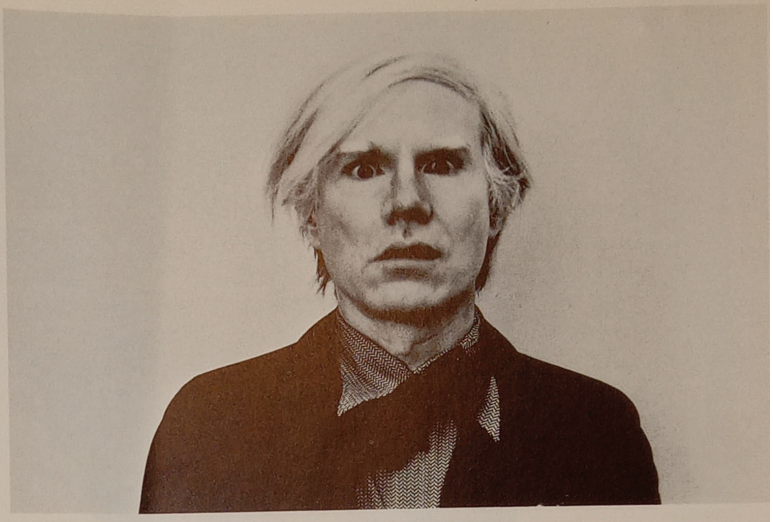
"If you want to know all about Andy Warhol, just look at the surface of my paintings and films and me, and there I am. There's nothing behind it."

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BOOKS

THE STORY OF "A"



The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again), by Andy Warhol, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 241 pages, hardbound, $7.95.

PETER PLAGENS

If I were writing obituaries or 99-cent supermarket encyclopedias, my précis on WARHOL, ANDY (b. Warhola, 1930, att. Carnegie Institute) would run thusly:

Effete former 5th-Avenue shoe illustrator who became, in the early '60s, the definitive Pop artist, with silkscreen repetitions of Liz and Campbell's soupcans and static films like *Empire* and *Sleep*. His total Pop lifestyle, however, is what finally distinguishes him from his contemporaries Roy Lichtenstein and Claes Oldenburg, both of whom maintain the fine artist's traditional antipode from the world they depict. Warhol's studio loft—"The Factory"—turned out experimental films, rock music, and instant "superstars" *née* debutante dopers, as well as numberless Pop *objets-d'art*. With an impeccable sense for the right "wrong" move, Warhol hired an actor to impersonate him at a dozen college lectures, freely franchised his name to Grade-B movies, and fashioned an indelible image of the consummately naïve yet all-knowing kitsch androgyne. He was critically shot in 1968 by a deranged Lesbian actress who thought he possessed "too much control" over her life. Recovered, but scarred, Warhol gradually metamorphosed his epicene hipness into a metaphysic and, in 1975, issued his *apologia, The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)*.

Andy Warhol used to be quite conventionally bright.

Someone said that Brecht wanted everybody to think alike. I want everybody to think alike. But Brecht wanted to do it through Communism, in a way. Russia is doing it under government. It's happening here all by itself without being under a strict government.

It confuses me that people expect Pop Art to make a comment or say that its adherents merely accept their environment. I've viewed most of the paintings I've loved—Mondrians, Matisses, Pollocks—as being rather dead-pan in that sense. All painting is fact, and that is enough; the paintings are charged with their very presence. The situation, physical ideas, physical presence—I feel that is the content. ("What Is Pop Art? Interviews with Eight Painters," by G. R. Swenson, *Art News*, November, 1963.)

The literary style of *Philosophy* illuminates Warhol's ascension from a mere "sharp" artist who chose media banality as his territory to compleat, urbane, camp atavism. The book reads like it's straight off the dictaphone, transcribed in Lindy ballpoint drone, as though by an overweight fifteen-year-old White Plains schoolgirl, in one of those quilted pink diaries with stick-figure lovers and musical notes on the cover, and a gold lock. Steinian run-on sentences, dreadfully serious about trivia and shrilly trivial about serious things (your #1 high camp mannerism), relentless restatement, really overusing "really" and always overusing "always." This is, of course, simply Applied Pop, and Warhol has never been precious about it. Part of Warhol's genius is, in fact, an appetency for dead-panning thundering clichés, as though he were a Scarsdale matron assigned a Pop project in evening art class, and making them revelatory—the perfect smart-ass riposte. By such gambits he obviates the art-world paranoia about trade secrets. You wanna know how he paints? He'll tell you.

I look at my canvas and I space it out right. I think, "Well, over here in this corner it looks like it sort of belongs," . . . So I look at it again and I say, "The space in that corner there needs a little blue," and so I put my blue up there. . . . And then it needs to be more spaced, so I take my little blue brush and I blue it over there, and then I take my green brush and . . . I green it there . . . (p. 149)

None of this is new, but rather a permutation of the '50s artist-as-blue-color honest labor fetish, e.g. "I don't give a good goddamn about 'fine' painting. I just smear it around until it *works*, then I pour me a bourbon and forget about it." Such posturing would grow quickly tiresome, even for Warhol, if there weren't a *weltanschauung* behind it.

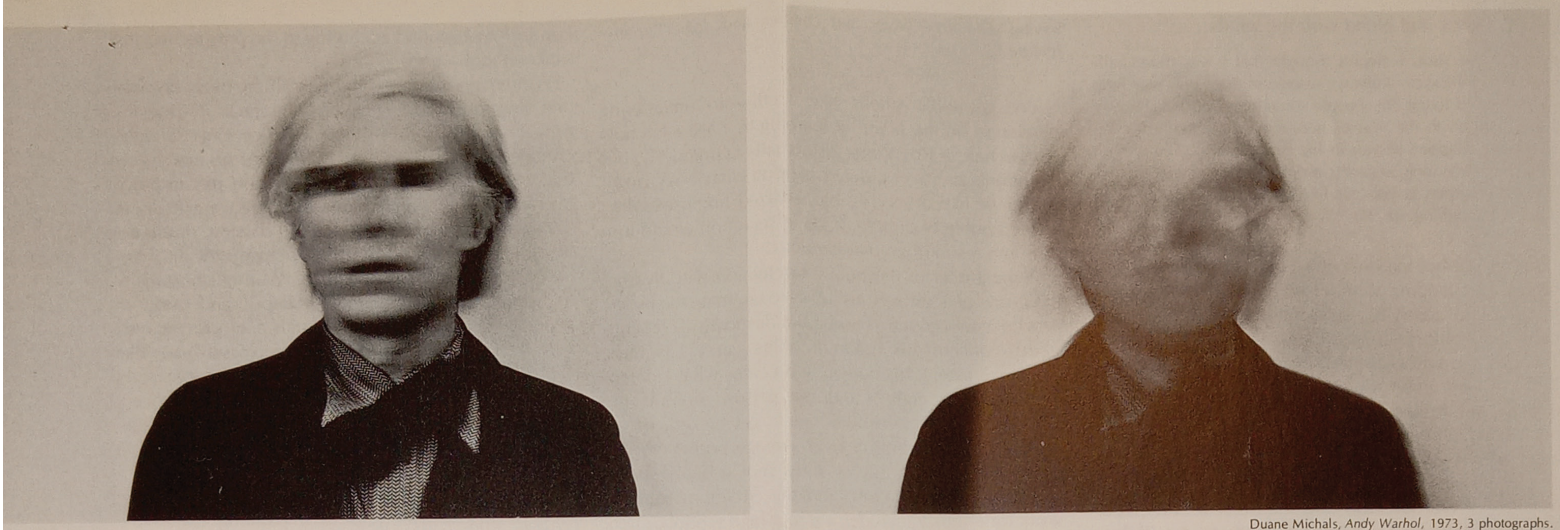
What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You can be watching TV and see Coca-Cola, and you can know that the President drinks Coke, Liz Taylor drinks Coke, and just think, you can drink Coke, too. 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. (pp. 100–101)

Warhol standardizes another commercial product, Art, but he continues the hierarchies of fame and price. (Admittedly, 'twould be out of character for Warhol to crank out egalitarian-activist editions of millions to be distributed to *la gente* for a few bucks each. And there are, to be sure, nuances of conception and handling in a Warhol portrait which, to the connoisseur, are worth the extra bread.) The pressures of trendy-book writing (or an overambitious ghost) drive him to such infrequent standard bullshit as, "The most beautiful thing in Tokyo is McDonalds/The most beautiful thing in Stockholm is McDonalds/The most beautiful thing in Florence is McDonalds/Peking and Moscow don't have anything beautiful yet" (p. 71), but he otherwise strikes the mark at an amazing clip. What he hits is, at least in terms of the in-house art history to which we are all such lickspittles, staggering. Consider: Douglas Huebler's reputation gets a lot of lift from the 1970 *pronunciamento*, "The world is full of objects, more or less interesting, I do not wish to add any more." (Ergo, the ultimate radical esthetic—the elimination of art objects in favor of art ideas.) Warhol's *oeuvre* says in effect, "The world is full of tastes and ideas, more or less interesting, I do not wish to add any more."

I'm not saying that popular taste is bad so that what's left over from the bad taste is good: I'm saying that what's left over is probably bad, but if you can take it and make it good or at least interesting, then you're not wasting as much as you

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Duane Michals, *Andy Warhol*, 1973, 3 photographs.

would otherwise. You're recycling work and you're recycling people, and you're running your business as a by-product of other businesses. Of other *directly competitive* businesses, as a matter of fact. So that's a very economical operating procedure. (p. 93)

Warhol doesn't piss around with artists' textbook-tough breast-beatings, nor does he proceed by halves in negating poor ol' defenseless *objects*; he goes right to the nut, *thought*. *All* ideas are interesting, *all* tastes, *all* feelings, *all* philosophies, *all* stances, everything, so why not make conventional things in the easiest way, or *refuse* to make them (if that's your bag) in the easiest way (by having someone else do it)? As sheer strategy, it's wonderful, but it would have the same disadvantage of the cliché without the *weltanschauung*: tiresomeness. Fortunately, Warhol is firmly grounded in an infirm sensibility: the quasi-disadvantaged quiet kid from the Slavic side of a Pennsylvania coal town has contracted a severe reverence for brand-name respectability, for the reassuring litany of product-label catechism, for an inverse consumer snobbery. Moreover, Warhol possesses a muttish clairvoyance, an unerring antenna for the correct detail (especially in the '60s, when outraging middle-classness became a tenet of the middle class): sexy, faggy, homely, and unimportant, e.g. pimples, underwear, and diets.

My favorite thing to buy is underwear. I think buying underwear is the most personal thing you can do, and if you could watch a person buying underwear you would really get to know them. . . . I think the strangest people are the ones who send someone else to buy underwear for them. I also wonder about people who *don't* buy underwear. I can understand not wearing it, but not buying it? (p. 229)

But if you do watch your weight, try the Andy Warhol New York City Diet: when I order in a restaurant, I order everything that I don't want, so I have a lot to play around with while everyone else eats. Then, no matter how chic the restaurant is, I insist that the waiter wrap the entire plate up like a to-go order, and after we leave the restaurant I find a little corner outside in the street to leave the plate in, because there are so many people in New York who live in the streets, with everything they own in shopping bags. (p. 69)

In the last item Warhol treads an almost invisible boundary between chic inanity and amoral irresponsibility. As there had been a "banality of evil," so we can conceive of an "evil of banality." Warhol unsheathes a deliberate insensibility unredeemed by his carbon-tipped "innocence." He "recommends" a "diet" involving buying and wasting overpriced restaurant food, then bleats a weak retrieval by saying he leaves it (Litter New York City? Heaven forbid!) for street people (who have learned, if anybody has, if you eat something dead-dropped in Manhattan, you'll be shitting razor blades in five minutes). Warhol's floating roster of "superstars" who've OD'd or been committed, the roll-call of nubile young boys who've fled the Midwest to reach, via The Factory, the whips and studded bikinis of the East Village rough trade, and *Philosophy's* self-serving account of the thinly disguised, pathetic "Taxi" (Edie Sedgwick), raise the question: if you can do passive Good (by lying in front of the bulldozer), can you do passive Bad (by feigning obliviousness to the wormy milieu you've chaperoned)? My answer is, although not provable in criminal court: Yes. Warhol intuits the problem and, in the book, begs us not to ask him about it because he'd be the last person to understand what went on, anyway.

Warhol says, in short, he cannot be held responsible; he's a walking case history for *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*. Warhol is nature's locus for another art-fashion, serigraphy's way of invading painting, or a camera's way of obtaining more film, etc. Why then, you ask, is Warhol the necessary agent for all of this, why do all the fame and money accrue to him, rather than to anybody/everybody else? Because, Warhol himself implies, it still takes a certain talent which, within this limpid behavioralism, assumes the form of psychic short-circuitry. Warhol isn't an automaton, because he just can't proceed straight from A to B and back again; something always seems to go haywire in between.

I was doing a commercial the other day for some sound equipment, and I could have pretended to say all the words they gave me that I would never say that way, but I just couldn't do it. (p. 83)

Still, what of the consequences? Warhol can see them coming—he ain't dumb—so isn't he just as guilty? Well, guilt requires an embedded history; the mind must extend temporally backward to apprehend the deed. This requires, at the least, recollection.

I have no memory. Every day is a new day because I don't remember the day before. Every minute is like the first minute of my life. I try to remember but I can't. That's why I got married—to my tape recorder. That's why I seek out people with minds like tape recorders to be with. My mind is like a tape recorder with one button—Erase. (p. 199)

(Thought I had him here: "Record"—gather indiscriminately and never play back—is the button he wants. So much for the Grand Analogy, I mused, the strained Summing Up. Then it dawned on me: tape recorders *erase* while they record. The guy doesn't miss a trick.)

We now stand at the crossroads: the ambitious fabricator of department store bagatelles stumbles along as the perfectly imperfect machine, stamping out clogged, slipped silkscreens, shaky-tripod movies, and vapid safaris into celebrityland. If Warhol had intact his 1949 ego (the year he came to New York), if he could peer out through the same "lazy eyes" (which required goofy pinhole spectacles), from the same unbreakable self and say, "There, I *made it*," we would be at dead end with him, that is, back only with the original gambit. But Warhol's self has always been a little translucent, precarious, ready to waft out under the

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museum door and blend with the winds.

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 the movies is unreal, but actually it's the way things happen to you 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. (p. 91)

Here, Warhol exposes more than an ability to crib from *Understanding Media*; his greatness resides in his Buddha-like passivity, deliberate, refined, probably painful psychic near-invisibility. Warhol *isn't there*. Through the conscienceless manufacture of oversize Brillo boxes, cow wallpaper, modular portraits of upper-class shrikes, detumescent sex movies, and a volume of "philosophy," equal parts Aubrey Beardsley and Kathryn Kuhlman, he sacrifices.

Two friends of mine, one a museum curator who mounted a Warhol show and the other a newspaper critic who attended a book-signing party for *Philosophy*, attest to his genuineness-to-the-point-of-sainthood. The critic accidentally encountered Warhol waiting for an elevator and asked if he could ask a few questions. Of course, Warhol replied, but he couldn't guarantee any coherence, since he was temporarily "lost" without his entourage around him. Apparently there is a benign corpus containing the physical and aural characteristics of the *vidette* of Pop Art, but there is no *Warhol*.

Still, slim traces of his visceral existence do exist, and Warhol, always willing to be difficult, readily brings up the most troublesome: sex.

The most exciting thing is not-doing-it. If you fall in love with someone and never do it, it's much more exciting. (p. 41)

After being alive, the next hardest work is having sex. Of course, for some people it isn't work because they need the exercise and they've got the energy for the sex and sex gives them even more energy. Some people *get* energy from sex and some people *lose* energy from sex. I have found that it's too much work. . . . I'm an energy-loser. But I can understand it when I see people around trying to get some.

I have a hard time allowing that this will-o'the-wisp Warhol has the luxuries of specific age, parentage, address, schooling, shoe size, and active sexual preferences. But goddamnit, his "energy-loser" story doesn't ring right. So I'm stuck with Where, Who, and, most titillating, What? Warhol provokes it by dropping hankies like "bedroom," "affair," and "married."

So in the late '50s I started an affair with my television which has continued to the present when I play around in my bedroom with as many as four at a time. But I didn't get married until 1964 when I got my first tape recorder. My wife. My tape recorder and I have been married for ten years now. When I say "we," I mean my tape recorder and me. A lot of people don't understand that. (p. 26)

When we discover his amour is a small appliance, we suspect a decoy. So Warhol goes a little further.

I think I'm missing some chemicals and that's why I have this tendency to be more of a—mama's boy. . . . I think I'm missing some responsibility chemicals and some reproductive chemicals. If I had them I would probably think more about aging the right way and being married four times and having a family—wives and children and dogs. I'm immature . . . (p. 111)

We get what smells like Truth—an unflattering revelation on the plane of learning that Mike Nichols has no hair or Roy Rogers is actually Leonard Sly, but the odor is also of cop-out, tossing off what looks, on all accounts, like a very visible, stylized homosexuality, as if a couple of ounces of gland secretion would turn him into a suburban *paterfamilias*.

A great deal of the public fascination with Warhol (he is one of a few serious artists to fascinate the public—who would go see a Francis Bacon movie of *Frankenstein*?) concerns his apparent, blithe gaiety. His art is, to a large extent, his person (who cares what Lichtenstein does at night?) and his person prompts the imagination. Does he fuck, suck, get fucked, or get sucked? Now I admit to over-average prurience: I've always wanted to see a dirty movie starring Eric Sevareid and Pat Nixon, and my circuitous route to work fortuitously includes a junior high school or two. Nevertheless, the violence of my query is handmaiden to Warhol's passivity. Blank paintings (like Ad Reinhardt's) are the ones most often vandalized, and vacuous people unwittingly bring our attack bile to a boil. Somebody did try to murder Warhol and now (the curator tells me) there are bodyguards wherever he goes. Just as Warhol's art transcends fashion into structure (i.e. it doesn't simply succeed as sophisticated modern art, it subverts all modern art), his campy mien transcends decadence into a weird Non-violent Resistance.

Warhol, the "energy-loser," looks terrible, like he won't last another ten years; Calvin Tompkins called him an "angel of death." If we wouldn't go so far as to assassinate him to loosen his "control" (Valerie Solanis was probably steamed at Warhol's maddening *self-control*), I wonder if, on his deathbed, he'd cool it out to the end, like ask for a toothpick . . . or a cup of soup. It probably aggravates several among us that he's *been* to the wall and sure comes off better than John Connally.

No doubt about it, Warhol is a genius, the true American Duchamp. Warhol succeeds by guilelessly making the best "art" he can (thus questioning the whole modernist premise in actuality), whereas Duchamp did it theoretically by self-consciously attempting to overcome his own *beaux-arts* inculcation. Duchamp points out the dichotomies; Warhol lives them. Strategically, Warhol's effect has been greater because, unlike Duchamp, he's totally outflanked corruption; there's nothing Warhol could do—endorse oil paints, host a TV art-appreciation show, open a chain of sleazy tux rentals, or hire on as official White House photographer—that would diminish his reputation as a *serious* artist. He's the opposite of Lichtenstein, who laboriously curates the tension between high-art context and low-art draftsmanship; Warhol removes the tension, makes it easy, and makes making it easy respectable. (In the 1971 *Art and Technology* exhibition, for example, Warhol's ridiculous flower/rain machine was a silly failure, but it dovetailed with the inevitable silly failure of the whole show, thereby making a kind of Warhol-work out of *it*. Lichtenstein's film, on the other hand, tried hard to be Pop-techno-beautiful according to the prospectus, and sank without a trace.)

We remain interested through all the ploys because one question still remains: *does he mean it*? Does he truly think Liz is lovely and a *Police Gazette* ugly-chrome is the way to display it? Does he really aver that metallic hair and powdered acne pits improve his looks? All of which amounts to: are we actually in the presence of weird and original passion, or are we being conned? We knew that Duchamp meant it because he welcomed no imitators. Warhol's hospitality to hangers-on, sycophants, emulators, and freaks in general confuses us. If he *is* such a bloody marvel, why does he suffer a floodtide of colossal bores like Gerard Malanga and Viva? Over the last dozen years Warhol's form (ego) has evolved to match his concept (banality). This confluence indicates a reverse development—like a great biologist growing to resemble the earthworms he's studying. It makes sense in a flip-flop way, like slides of Mondrian's work shown chronologically backward to a painting class—the gridded asymmetric building blocks finally triumphing as windmills at sunset. And sure enough, it contains a final paradox.

I loved working when I worked at commercial art and they told you what to do and how to do it and all you had to do was correct it and they'd say yes or no. The hard thing is when you have to dream up the tasteless things to do on your own. When I think about what sort of person I would most like to have on a retainer, I think it would be a boss. A boss who could tell me what to do, because that makes everything easy when you're working. (p. 96)

It's the wonderful puzzle of determinism and free will. In Pauline Réagé's *The Story of O* the heroine makes a free choice to be totally submissive to her lover, who eventually and permanently abandons her to another, more vile, man. Since the choice is made out of "love" for her lover and since it results in her being irrevocably deprived of him, there's a cosmic non sequitur in it. "The most exciting thing [about love] is not-doing-it." Warhol, in making a free choice to help himself as an artist, would choose to place himself in obedience to a "boss" who would then deprive him of the *sine qua non* of the artist, creativity. He would cancel the artist but ensure the *objet-d'art*, just as 'O' cancels the love but insures fidelity.

Warhol was not always merely in an abstract, logical position. He was that conglomerate of fears and hopes and taste buds and indigestion we call a person. Once, early on in the book, there is a glimpse of him.

When I think of my high school days, all I can remember, really, are the long walks to school, through the Czech ghetto with the babushkas and overalls on the clothesline, in McKeesport, Pennsylvania. . . . I wasn't very close to anyone, although I guess I wanted to be, because when I would see the kids telling one another their problems, I felt left out. . . . We passed a bridge every day and underneath were used prophylactics. I'd always wonder out loud to everybody what they were, and they'd laugh. (p. 22)

Whether the person therein has totally disintegrated in the cause of Pop, or has just happily cut loose from the moorings of personal anxiety, is beyond me. But I know it'll be a while before an artist walks that road again.■

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Sue G.

Superpop or A Night at the Factory

by Roger Vaughan

Reynolds wrap is what hits you. The whole place is Reynolds wrap, the ceiling, the pipes, the walls. They said it was like this, but until you walk in and actually see that it is true, until you stand and look all around and stare at all that foil and wonder how many rolls of the stuff was used and how many man hours it took to pin it to the walls and crinkle it around the pipes and paste it to the ceiling, you don't believe it. And that isn't all.

The floor has been painted silver. All the cabinets stuffed with paint and film and records have been painted silver. The hi-fi components have been painted silver, and speakers are in silver boxes. The sound is incessant. The tape recorder is silver, and the thermofax machine is silver. There is a silver exercycle, two silver fire extinguishers, four cases of coke bottles painted silver, and an old, silver vacuum cleaner. There is a huge trunk like the one Judy Garland says she was born in, painted silver. The TV set has been sprayed silver, and beside it are the upended legs of a store mannequin, silver, of course. The pay telephone on the wall is silver. The odd assortment of stools and chairs are silver. And the bathroom is silver-lined and painted, including the toilet bowl and flushing mechanism.

Andy Warhol's long, straight hair is silver. At first you think it has been sprayed, like the telephone, because there is some black underneath the top layer. It is not real, but Andy Warhol is real. He is stretched out on a red hairy couch, and when people come in he gets up and is very polite and says, "How do you do," when introduced. He has the roundish horn-rimmed sunglasses on like he always does, a dirty pink shirt, black sweatshirt and jeans, and black cuffed zipper boots with medium heels. He is very relaxed, almost sagging. His mouth is sullen. His hand is loose when you shake it. He is skinny, not too tall, and has an anemic look about him.

Two of Warhol's assistants are in the studio with him. One of them, Gerard, with a Beethoven haircut and a weight-lifter's build, is asleep on another couch. The other, tall, thin and shy, is thermofaxing the liner notes of an opera album.

A photographer is there, and he sets up a few lights and prepares a remote camera, the idea being to let Warhol press the button and take self-portraits. This appeals to Andy. "Oh great! Wow, oh yes, marvelous!" He fiddles with the button, clicking off a few frames, and becomes more enthusiastic. He looks up from studying the button and says in his soft, fluid voice, "Why this is really marvelous. I could do my paintings this way, I mean if a person were dying he could photograph his own death." He looks a bit wide-eyed as he contemplates this, and his mouth twists ever so slightly into a pleased smile.

Warhol sits on the couch, looks directly at the camera, and presses the remote button. His expression never changes as the camera whirs through 36 exposures. He shoots 10 rolls this way. Then there is a break, and he goes out and buys some bananas and shoots two more rolls of himself eating the bananas because he has made a banana movie called *Harlot* in which the star of the film eats six bananas in one hour. While the camera is being reloaded, Warhol talks about a recent film he's done, *Suicide*.

"I found this person, my star, who has 13 scars on one wrist and 15 scars on the other wrist from suicide attempts. He has marvelous wrists. The scars are all different shades of purple. This was my first color movie. We just focused the camera on his wrists and he pointed to each scar and told its history, like when he did it, and why, and what happened afterward."

Someone suggests filming a real suicide, and Warhol brightens. "Ohh, wouldn't that be something," he says. "One of my friends committed suicide recently, but he didn't call me." Warhol's left hand goes to his lips in a habitual gesture. "He was so high he didn't think, I guess. He was a dancer and had been in a couple of my films. He got high and just danced right out the window." Warhol chews lightly on a fingernail and looks thoughtful, pondering with popartistic detachment what sort of film a real suicide would have made. He gets up and moves in a quiet, gliding way across the room to a table stacked with paint cans, and begins trying to match a certain shade of purple.

". . . 'The factory' is a good name for Warhol's place because of the way art is produced there . . . You half expect a ruddy-cheeked salesman to come bursting in from a successful road trip, waving order forms . . ."

On the floor, on one side of the room, 17 silk-screen paintings of the electric chair at Sing Sing Prison cover about 20 square feet, drying. There are three orange ones, five bright green, three yellow, one purple, four red, and one brown. Among them also is a bright blue Jackie Kennedy, a seven-foot Elvis Presley pulling a six gun, and one pink, black, green and red Liz Taylor on a pale green background. They were all news photos originally, Associated Press, UPI, *The Daily News*. Warhol clipped them, sent them out for silk screens to be made, and ran off prints by the numbers in the studio. Mass production art.

Warhol calls his place "the factory." The street entrance is a small green door sandwiched between an antique shop and a parking garage. The elevator is for freight, and the studio itself, pre tin-foil days, was dingy and functional, with dark brick walls and steel beams in the ceiling. But more than that, "the factory" is a good name for Warhol's place because of the way art is produced there. You half expect a ruddy-cheeked salesman with a sample case on wheels to come bursting in from a successful road trip, waving order forms, yelling, "They want 100 more electric chairs in Denver, and St. Louis wants 500 of the flowers, 500! Imagine."

The flowers, Warhol explains with a smile, came from a fabric that was in a Kodak ad on how to print color in your home darkroom. He gets up from his knees where he has been working on the purple color matching problem, the background of a three-foot square Liz Taylor head, and walks to a cardboard box sitting on a table. He motions to several large different colored flower prints along the way. "These are for my Paris show," he says, opening the cardboard box. He pulls out a handful of tiny canvases, five-by-five inches, covered with the same flower print. "They come six to a package, and you get six different colors. Each set costs $30." He sounded like he was selling Christmas wrappings, and he must have thought so too, because he suddenly looked up and almost laughed. Someone asks how many he had made, and he says about a hundred. "When should I stop? I don't know how many to make. Should I stop making them?" He shrugs and goes back to Liz Taylor.

Beside the Liz Taylor on the floor is a white canvas on stretchers, the same size as the painted one. Warhol has finally *(Continued on page 9)*

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Superpop or A Night at the Factory

(Continued from page 7) matched the purple to his satisfaction, and begins to paint the white canvas, *with a brush!* Andy Warhol painting with a brush! The photographer moves in, then stops at Warhol's upraised hand. "No no, please, we don't use a brush anymore. It's just that a blank has been lost, and I have to do an odd one to replace it." Warhol seems embarrassed to be caught with a brush, and blushes faintly. But a blank? "You see, for every large painting I do, I paint a blank canvas the same background color. The two are designed to hang together however the owner wants. He can hang it right beside the painting, or across the room, or above or below it." What does this really add to the art work? "Nothing, really," he says with the same small smile. "It just makes them bigger, and mainly, it makes them cost more." Liz Taylor, for instance, three feet by three feet, in any color you like, with the blank, costs $1600. Signed, of course.

They wouldn't have been signed, Warhol claims, unless the Leo Castelli Gallery, his dealer, which gets a substantial percentage of the take for that privilege, hadn't ordered it. "People just won't buy things that are unsigned," Warhol complains. "It's so silly. I really don't believe in signing my work. Anyone could do the things I am doing, and I don't feel they should be signed." He was asked why he spent a few hours recently signing Campbell's Soup cans in a supermarket if he felt so strange about signing things. *He smiled, "That was a big joke. Gerard really signed* the cans." Warhol turned toward Gerard who had awakened and was preparing a projector for the evening's film screenings. Tennessee Williams was expected along with some other guests. "Didn't you, Gerard?" Gerard nodded, a curl dropping over his right eye. "We just thought it would be funny to have a bunch of cans signed by me that people would take home and actually open and eat. Gerard didn't copy my signature, even. He just signed my name. It really doesn't matter."

"The Gallery thinks it does, though. Look at these." Warhol goes over to a shopping bag on the floor and pulls something from it neatly wrapped in tissue paper. It is a can of Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup weighing nearly 10 pounds. "The studio had these made for me to sign. They are beautiful, aren't they? Aluminum, I guess, solid. They cost about $50 a can, I guess. What do you think? They want me to sign them all, but I don't think I should. Do you think so? What should I do? I really can't decide whether to sign them or not." His hand goes to his lips again. "I don't think I will."

Someone tells a story of how he once watched Picasso sitting in the square of some village in Spain, drawing on plates with a marking pen, signing each one in less than a minute and charging $100 apiece for them. There was a long line of purchasers, and a cashier had been set up to collect the money. "Really?" Warhol asks. "No kidding, he really did that?" And he may have been reconsidering those soup cans.

Since returning from Paris this summer, where, Warhol said, people "seemed to like the flowers," he hasn't done anything to sign. It's all movies now, at the rate of one a week. As one of his assistants put it, "Andy has been, well, kind of doing 'paint-think' since he got back." "If I do start painting again," Warhol says, "someone else will do it all, I won't touch anything." Except maybe affix his signature for Mr. Castelli. Of course there are also the pillows, various cloud-shaped hunks of silver plastic inflated with helium—the ultimate in mobiles—that Warhol contracted to have made some time ago. But they too are past.

Naomi Levine interrupts Warhol's reverie. She is one of the stars of Andy's silver screen. She came in early to use the phone, and was still there at midnight. She is short, with long black hair and watery brown eyes that plead. She is small-waisted, bosomy and eager. She is the star of one of the many *Kiss* movies by Andy Warhol, an hour of kissing between Naomi and a guy in front of a camera that never moves. She is also the star of *The Couch,* an experimental film in which all of Naomi's charms are revealed as she passionately and nakedly squirms on a couch. Her efforts are for naught. The male co-star is more fascinated by his motorcycle, parked next to the couch, which he works on during the entire film. She has been in eight other of his movies. She has made three movies herself, one of which she breathily says is called *Yes!,* and involves people playing with flowers in a country setting, and playing with each other, and just "having fun."

When she gets off the phone it rings for Andy, and while he talked she blew in his free ear and giggled naughtily.

Then the people start arriving. One of Andy's film stars comes in and kisses him on the back of the neck while he is still on the phone. Two girls come in, one a photography stylist around town, with her friend, the dress designer from the Coast, who is wearing a V-neck pull-over mink-toe sweater.

There is a tired-looking, pregnant ex-model, bulging out the front of her white plastic Courreges suit, striking poses here and there for a gawky kid with a camera who someone says is her husband. A little 14-year-old girl with long blonde hair ("she runs her own rock and roll group") is doing the jerk with this conformist, long-haired kid ("he blows guitar in her group"). There is the ex-head of a 97th Street and Columbus Avenue girl gang who explains that she has been saved by "urban renewal and Andy Warhol." Instead of bopping heads, she now appears in his films. Three little boys, ages three, four, and five, are wandering around, little bugs, playing spooky games among the silver props, oblivious to the rest of the world, underground people in their own small right. More stars come in, male, quiet and morose, along with blonde Edie Sedgwick, the new superstar, in five-inch earrings, net stockings and a leotard.

Gerard and another assistant sweep the floor. Couches and chairs are arranged in front of the silver screen. More people. Someone changes the record and the Supremes are singing again, "Baby, baby, where did our love go. . . ?", and some fellow in an Ivy League suit, with a rubber snake around his neck, is frugging with Naomi, who is paralyzing everyone with the way she is moving and jiggling. The fellow with the snake turns the volume up.

"The secret is, it's got to be livable," this copiously sweating Beach-Boys type shouted over the noise. He says he is Chuck Wein, Harvard '60, Warhol's new writer-director. "We have a lot of parties and a good time, but it's what happens between the dancing. . . ."—and he goes back to the workout he has been having with the ex-girls-gang queen of 97th Street and Columbus Avenue.

Tennessee Williams comes in, small, tweed-sport jacketed, with brown suede brass-buckle shoes, a mustache and big sunglasses. Tennessee doesn't say much, he just says, "Hello," and walks around. He looks intrigued by the electric chairs and by one big silk screen of an auto wreck picture Warhol has pulled from a newspaper. The wrecked car is upside down, and people are spilling out of smashed windows. There is some discussion about whether the woman hanging out of the back window is dead or alive. Tennessee says he thinks she is alive, then decides she is definitely dead. Definitely.

"... Then the people start arriving ... There is a pregnant, tired looking ex-model ... There is the ex-head of a 97th Street and Columbus Avenue girl gang ... There is Edie Sedgwick, the new super star, in five-inch earrings, net stockings and a leotard ..."

Tennessee digs all the Liz Taylors, the red one and the green one and the purple one, then says he likes the red one best. But he is more interested in Naomi and the guy with the snake. They are going hard, arms jerking, hips bumping, and Tennessee Williams doesn't take his eyes off them. Tennessee shuffles his feet in time to the music.

Lights go out and people make for the orchestra seats as Mr. Beethoven flips a switch, and *Screen Test,* by Andy Warhol the film maker, starts to roll.

The enormous, out of focus head of a sultry, attractive girl flashes on the screen. She is brushing her hair. She brushes and brushes. Then sound. The kind of sound you expect from a very old, used-up army training film, unintelligible, garbled, filled with static. An occasional word filters through. An off-screen voice (Warhol's) is telling the girl that if she wants to become a movie star, she must master the art of saying certain words with the right inflection. The off-screen voice starts drilling her on a word, over and over and over again. The word was "diarrhea." "Die—ahhhh—riiiiii—aaaaaa," the off-screen voice coaches, and her lips form the syllables lovingly and obscenely, her eyes darkened under lowered lids. Tennessee Williams roars. Then someone tells us the girl on the screen is really a guy.

Chuck Wein, Harvard '60, hastens to explain that things are changing. "Andy does more with the camera now. Sometimes he zooms it, and he even turns it on and off occasionally during the action. That creates unusual effects. He still won't cut or edit, but he has agreed to let me put together all these hour and a half segments we have been doing with Edie, things like *Your Children They Will Burn, Not Just Another Pretty Face, Beauty #2,* and *Isn't It Pretty to Think So,* which is the last line of Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* into a long feature film. We also plan to make a technicolor film called *Black and White,* about an interracial romance. We call what we are doing *Synscintima.* 'Syn,' for synthetic, 'scin' for scintillating, and 'intima' for the personal or intimate nature of the films. We have dubbed the whole thing 'reel-real,' or the idea of the reel of film creating the reality."

The lights go out on Wein's discourse, and reel-real number two of *Screen Test* by synscintimatographer Andy Warhol dances on the screen. Going down in the freight elevator someone jokingly wonders aloud if Naomi is really a guy. ☙

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"... Of note is the fact that I—a wife and mother with gray hairs showing at the temples—had no trouble really living it up ..."











(Above) Gwen Gibson (center in all pictures) in her role as a summer freeloader.

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Art Summer 166

By David Antin

Warhol: The Silver Tenement

His ambiguous blend of the chic-but-shabby with the beautiful recently was seen at Castelli, New York; his next stop, London

Wittgenstein once pointed out that "A proposition is an image of reality." It almost seems as if the most curious aspects of Warhol's work grew out of an examination of the converse statement "An image is a proposition about reality." This conviction certainly underlies the cliché that "one picture means more than a thousand words," which suggests that somewhere embedded in the image there is a proposition that cannot be stated in a thousand words. That is to say, there is such a proposition and it is unclear.

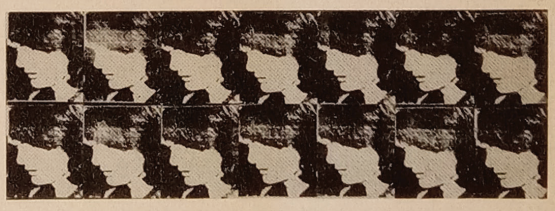
This touching faith in the meaningfulness and intelligibility of the seen gives a certain portentousness to almost any of the images surrounding us, provided they happen to dominate our attention. Who has not been tricked into regarding intensely some isolated numeral or enigmatic fragment of a label blocking the view from a doorway. I know a poet who wrote a poem on the sign . . . ZEN FOODS. Consider the News of the Day. A man in a chesterfield, carrying a briefcase, is seen descending the steps of a building. A reporter holding a microphone walks up to him and says, "Have you anything to say about your meeting with the President, sir?" The man answers, "No comment," and walks out of the picture. Still, we are left with the disturbing impression that there is something that we have seen. It is this disturbing sense that Warhol can count on.

In his most recent show, the back room at Castelli's was plastered with citron colored wallpaper onto which had been silk-screened 73 fluorescent pink cows (somebody counted them). Not whole cows, cow heads. The large trapezoidal face magnified to the point of incipient disappearance did not have sufficient dots to fill out the nose or the horns and stared blankly out of the wall. They were nevertheless recognizable, and recognizability is the only indispensable characteristic of an image. (If it is not recognizable it is not an image at all). Pushed

Author: Poet, critic, linguistics scholar, David Antin will be remembered by ARTNEWS readers for his recent essay on the grey imagery of Robert Morris.



Film-strip from Warhol's movie *Eat*, starring painter Robert Indiana with a mushroom.



Jackie, 1964, silk-screen on canvas, one of three groups of fourteen panels, 20 inches wide.
Castelli Gallery



Disaster, detail, 1964, silk-screen on canvas.
Ileana Sonnabend Gallery, Paris

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Liz, 1963, four silk-screen panels on canvas, 80 inches high.
Castelli Gallery



Flowers, 1965, silk-screen on canvas, 82 inches high.
Castelli Gallery

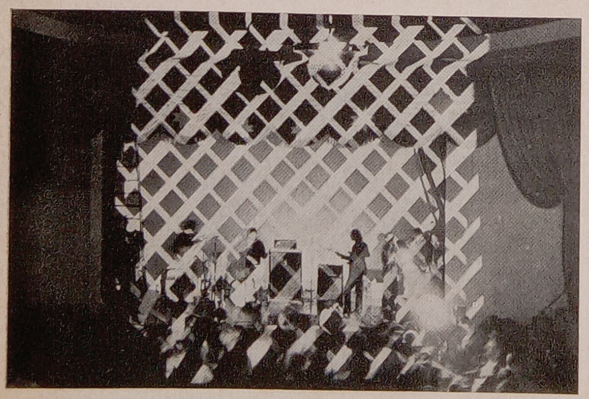
The Silver Tenement

one step further, it is Elsie the Borden Cow. It is POP ART. It is BANAL. It is funny or vicious, depending on your taste. But change the affect slightly.

The foolish trapezoidal faces, enlarged to a painful scale—the point of incipient disappearance—did not have sufficient dots to fill out the nose or the softly rounded horns and stared mournfully out of the wall. They are sorrowing clowns. "They are all of Us."

Warhol is the master of a communication game that elicits the false response. The image is presented and the affect flickers back and forth, enigmatically back and forth in the case of the cows.

Take the early comic strips. A blow-up of Nancy is incredible. (This is generally what makes it so impossible to reproduce the work of Pop artists, for unlike the work of fine artists theirs has to be seen in the original.) On the small scale of the comic strip *Nancy*, it is acceptable because it reads in the logic of its convention. It translates into its message so fast it is scarcely an image at all, i.e. it dissolves into Mr. Bushmiller's conception of the comic. Taken at the scale of the Warhol blow-up the drawing convention becomes insane. There is all that empty space between the contours marking the legs, the eyes are black holes, there is no nose, the hair is a crenellated football helmet, and that ribbon —it is monstrous. But it is still [Continued on page 58]



Warhol's discotheque, *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable;* with musicians called "The Velvet Underground" (photo Fred W. McDarrah).

Cow wallpaper covers the back room at the Castelli Gallery, New York, in Warhol's exhibition, March, 1966.



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Warhol

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Mr. Bushmiller's *Nancy*, which does not threaten us like the fleas under Robert Hooke's microscope or disgust us like the excreta under Swift's. In the end it is enigmatic.

It is enigmatic because there is no apparent context to which it can be related, and yet the scale, the centrality suggest that there is *some* context. It can be taken as axiomatic that an image always seeks a context. In fact, images are habitually so dominated by their contexts that removal effects an astonishing change, as is seen in collage. It is also very strikingly apparent in details of large paintings. In his early essay on Mannerism, Walter Friedländer describes in the following manner a female figure in Rosso Fiorentino's *Moses Defending the Daughters of Jethro:* "She is surrounded by frightened lambs, her arm outstretched in fright, a light cloak around her otherwise exposed body, sheer astonishment on her pretty face." The violent action of the painting appears to have conditioned Dr. Friedländer's response to the detail, because the face of the girl, viewed in isolation, is as impassive as a Greek mask, which it strongly resembles, and the animals, if they are in fact lambs, are as deadpan as Warhol's cows. What is more, the face of Moses himself, who is striking some fallen assailant, could if transposed be seen yawning in sleep instead of contorted with effort or anger. The context is what is all-determining.

But this drive to seek mood behind the image of the face is what Warhol works with in *Presley*, in *Cagney*, in the *Marilyns*. Absurdly in the case of the *Presleys*. Two canvases, four images, of the star as gunfighter at the point of the "showdown." What is shown? The blankfaced star faces the spectator, the drawn pistol in one hand, the other held near the hip. The four images are the same, but they are not alike. They have all been printed with different degrees of clarity, at faintly different heights on the canvas. An arbitrary change of color from one canvas to the next shifts everything. From left to right you read out "purposeful rage," "affronted innocence," "murderous sullenness," "terror." Nonsense! You go back and read it out again. It is indisputable that there is a subtle shift from image to image as the eye traverses the two canvases. But is it in the images themselves? From one canvas to the next there is a sharp jump as the color shifts. Everyone knows color affects mood. How? But the whole thing is ridiculous. It is a staged promotion shot. There *is* no mood. And yet. . .

In the *Marilyns* the sense of hidden meaning is enhanced by public tragedy. There is the gay, familiar, open-mouthed face. Surely lurking somewhere behind it is some cue, some information communicating a private agony. This is the conviction that spewed up columns of drivel in the papers, reams of poems, learned dissections by psychiatrists and sociologists. It was also this that led Mishkin in the *Idiot* to say that if he had been a painter he would have painted nothing but the faces of men about to be executed, the faces of the condemned. The belief in the moment of truth made visible. This conviction also compels subway riders to stare into the faces of the British Heath Killers or the untroubled features of the strangled bride in the pages of the *Daily News*. Consider Warhol's *10 Most Wanted Men*. So captioned they are a sinister crew and we can all detect the marks of depravity on their ravaged faces. But change the caption. They are: *Founders of the Little League, Board of Directors of a Soft Drink Company, Worker Priests, Members of New Evangelical Religious Sect.* In each case we can read the marks of their lives back into the photographed faces. Take the *Golden Deaths*, a centered, empty electric chair in an empty room, the straps loose, the leader cable visible in the grain of the newsphoto overcolored yellow. I once worked with a man who told me he had written away to see if he could get tickets for himself and his wife to attend Lepke's execution because he thought it would be an experience to remember.

This impulse to touch tragedy, or, more broadly, meaning, is the basis also of the *Jackies*. The face of Jacqueline Kennedy, as familiar as royalty, caught in a public disaster, seen over and over again on the television screen, in the newsreels, the newspapers. The individual shots of her are now as familiar as the Stations of the Cross. This is where she gets out of the car, her skirt covered with blood; here she watches Lyndon Johnson being sworn in; here she attends the funeral. The images are so well known that they are recognizable even when only the barest cues to the image remain. And in the Warhol canvases, the image can be said to barely exist. On the one hand this is part of his overriding interest in the "deteriorated image," the consequence of a series of regressions from some initial image of the real world. Here there is actually a series of images of images, beginning from the translation of the light reflectivity of a human face into the precipitation of silver from a photosensitive emulsion, this negative image developed, re-photographed into a positive image with reversal of light and shadow, and consequent blurring, further translated by telegraphy, engraved on a plate and printed through a crude screen with low-grade ink on newsprint, and this final blurring becoming the initial stage for the artist's blow-up and silkscreening in an imposed lilac color on canvas. What is left? The sense that there is something out there one recognizes and yet can't see. Before the Warhol canvases we are trapped in a ghastly embarrassment. This sense of the arbitrary coloring, the nearly obliterated image and the persistently intrusive feeling. Somewhere in the image there is a proposition. It is unclear.

The *Flowers* are somewhat different. Here a photograph of flowers from a Kodak journal has been interfered with. The greys are removed and what emerges are floppy-shaped petals and signified grass in decisively unnatural color: fluorescent blackish greens, orange, gold, purple. I have heard the *Flowers* described as funny, as a put-on. And they are absurd. The pathetically limp shapes in contrasting brilliant and absurdly somber color. They resemble those photomurals that interior decorators used to put on office walls, particularly the large 4-foot canvas. But the flowers are shaped like baggy-pants comedians (no interior decorator's touch) and somehow they resemble more closely Watteau's traveling players. It is practically impossible to say what the object of the pathos in *Flowers* is. Warhol manipulates an almost impossible pathos. It is, in a sense, the images themselves, their awkwardness, their insubstantiality, their unnaturalness. Watteau's comedians are also awkward, insubstantial and unnatural. At the same time Warhol insists on, and we are always aware of the unjustifiable nature of, the feeling. If this is a put-on, it is a good thing to remember that all of Zen is a kind of put-on and that a Zen master is nothing other than a master of the spiritual put-down.

This doubleness of affect is especially peculiar to the films. A remarkable thing about *Blowjob* was that when Allen Ginsberg saw it he was reported to have said, "The whole theater lit up when he came." While Paul Blackburn told me, "The thing never came off at all; he was like hungup, man." This is clear-cut contradiction, and again it was a case of reading out the proposition from the image of a face. The *10 Most Wanted Men* or *Founders of the Little League?* How do we know anything was going on at all in *Blowjob?* All we saw was the image of a face, peculiarly blank. Perhaps what we recognize is that enigmatic, introspective smile of one turned back upon himself. We recognize the same smile in *Haircut*, in *Eat*, in Leonardo's angels. Does this suggest a new interpretation for *La Gioconda?*

More impassive than the flowers but very similar are the Elizabeth Taylors. In this work the image lies in a very narrow space slightly in front of the canvas, and it is in this narrow field that the "ideal," expressionless face separates into a series of floating superimposed colors (Clement Greenberg, take note)—the eye shadow, the lips, the hair. The ideal face is transformed into a curious mask. It is not to be doubted that this is an "ideal" face despite the terrifying flesh tones out of Woolworth portraits, the mad eye-shadow and the wig-like hair. This is, after all, *Liz*. Warhol specializes in the Beautiful People and is probably the last significant "ideal" painter since Ingres (I call him a painter since he generally uses canvas and colors it). The ideal is to a great extent determined by its situation (pose) more than by its intrinsic appearance, and Warhol favors extreme frontality for the face, the chin slightly elevated and shadowed underneath (for men). This is the position taken for his own "ideal" portrait and for the multiple prints of Rauschenberg as the "Beautiful Youth." The main requisites for the beautiful face are traditional;

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youth and blankness, which almost amounts to the same thing. But under the spell of the hieratic pose (to which we have long been acculturated and whose significance we instantly recognize) we forget Warhol's age and Rauschenberg's pear-shaped body. There is only the curious seediness of the printed photographs. In the case of the Rauschenberg it at times almost obliterates the image entirely. The mechanical defects in the process are preserved and magnified and give a sense of wear and tear, of aging, to an ageless image of romanticized youth.

It is not an accident. In the *Jackies*, the magnification of the image and the suppression of grey values give her a remarkably ugly nose. Rauschenberg is almost consumed by underdevelopment; Warhol menaced by shadows spreading from under his jaw and threatening to engulf him, the same shadow spreading from the cleft in the chin of some unidentified actor in one of the films shown at Warhol's new discotheque. This seediness is a shadow hanging over all his images of the beautiful. Eye-shadow in the macabre face of his astonishing singer Nico, who so beautifully resembles a *memento mori*, as the marvelous deathlike voice coming from the lovely blond head sings, "Let me be your mirruh! Let me be your mirruh! Let me be your mirruh!" repeated each time with the precision of a cracked record; five o'clock shadow in the case of the beautiful Gerard. For who is seedier than Gerard Malanga? (Henry Geldzahler.) After prolonged exposure to Warhol's work, seediness emerges as almost a spiritual category. As a kind of inevitable consequence of the beautiful and its lesser and more pathetic forms, the chic and the fashionable. Everything Warhol touches becomes intricately seedy, and maybe even unsuccessful (beautifully though). The discotheque is a case in point.

The Exploding Plastic Inevitable on a Wednesday night—set in the barnlike upstairs hall of the Polsky Dom Narodny. With few people present, three films are projected simultaneously toward the front stage. In a panel on the left *Eat*. Robert Indiana eats his mushroom silently and self-consciously. Center *Vinyl*. In an endless juvenile delinquent routine Gerard Malanga keeps lighting cigarettes meaningfully until he becomes the victim of some obscure and ludicrous torture arrangement, which, correctly, is all preparation. On the right, *Banana*. The banana has been eaten many frames ago and a beautiful female impersonator in full dress lies on a couch while Malanga, this time well-dressed in 19th-century Viennese gentility, with another actor, looks on significantly (Freud and Breuer? An abortion?). The movies, all homemade and showing it, have a consistently attractive, ratty look. Rotary mosaic mirrors and stroboscopes flash light through the rather windy depths of Polsky Dom Narodny's upstairs hall. There is intermittent high decibel rock-and-roll and a few dancers. A little man walks around quietly emptying ashtrays. Fragments of a film sound-track mix with the music. Gradually more people come and dance. Robert Indiana changes colors and seems to be looking at the scene. After a while there are no more films and there is much more dancing. Finally The Velvet Underground itself, with Nico singing. Dancing are Ingrid Superstar, Gerard Malanga and Mary Woronow. Nico, perfect as a cadaver, sings "Let me be your mirruh! Let me be your mirruh! Let me be your mirruh!" Warhol, this precise moralist, has moved right into the teeth of the discotheque world brilliantly, but the most remarkable effects of his Exploding Plastic Inevitable seem to depend on the hall being half-empty for quite some time, i.e. on his not doing good business. Otherwise you never get to hear the films *(Hedy:* "Do you know who I am? I have fourteen thousand dollars in uncashed checks right here in my bag!"), the slow build-up, more typical of Judson Church than a discotheque. Warhol's success depends upon his failure, on being a magnificently cracked "mirruh" with the silver chipping off. But with the natural confidence of a Renaissance man, he has moved from medium to medium creating his priceless and beautifully shoddy works. (They are priceless because there is no way to set a price on them.) He has moved from painting to film, to the taped novel, soap opera, the discotheque, all sharing the same precisely pinpointed defectiveness that gives his work its brilliant accuracy. I have heard that his next move will be into architecture and that he is now planning a silver tenement. But the Sculls will move in, and he will have failed again (beautifully).

Marlborough

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IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL

AUCTION SALES

21st—25th June 1966

The collections of Mr. Luzio Crastan, of Sent, and Mr. Richard Kisling, of Zurich, and also from other private estates, will be sold in the forthcoming sales:

I Important paintings of such old and modern masters as: Jan Breughel the Younger, Dirk Hals, Master of the Parrot, Botticini, Veronese, Goya, Lebourg, Lépine, Trouillebert, Delacroix, Reynolds, Hodler, etc.

Finest furniture and handicrafts from Swiss and foreign private estates.

Excellent French clocks and pendules of the 18th century. Glass collection, miniatures, early Greek and Russian icons, silver, East Asian art, sculptures, porcelain, carpets.

II Highly important collection of arms and armour. Many exceptional fine fire-arms, a magnificent wheel-lock gun by Michael Kahl, Augsburg, dated 1586. Swords, daggers and Oriental arms. Books.

III Collection of drawings and water-colours, Swiss and foreign engravings by old and modern masters.

3 RICHLY ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUES.

ON VIEW: 6th-19th June, open daily from 8-12 and 2-6, Saturday until 5. Sunday from 2-6.

CLOSED: Thursday, June 9th (Corpus Christi)

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Artists in the Art News

Sculptors **Isamu Noguchi** and **Richard Stanckiewicz** were among the winners of this year's Brandeis University Creative Arts Awards. At the same time, a special award for outstanding achievement was given to **Meyer Schapiro.**

A retrospective by **Esteban Vicente** inaugurates the opening of the new Princeton Museum, and will continue into October. Vicente is currently artist-in-residence at Princeton.

A retrospective exhibition of the work of **Georgia O'Keeffe** is on until July 3 at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston.

An exhibition of the "Silver Series," by **Paul Brach,** is at New York University's Loeb Student Center (to June 6).

Golden Jubilee for the Cleveland Museum

Celebrating its fiftieth year with a year-long series of loan exhibitions, The Cleveland Museum inaugurates the series with "Fifty Years of Modern Art" [June 15-July 31.] In the fall, the Museum will have a show of important new acquisitions (to be covered in the September ARTNEWS), and in November, medieval art from French church treasuries.

Nakian

Continued from page 22

here is my Art, *sui generis*, me being an artist."

What an act of faith; what admirable leaps into the void.

Science has become the subject matter of contemporary folk-art. Ex-votos that used to be painted in gratitude for the intercession of local saints have been changed to thank Buckminster Fuller for the Tensegrity Strut, or Polaroid for its moirés, or even old Möbius for his Strip. And, as religion was to the peasants in the Middle Ages, Science has become the source of comforting optimism about the better life to come, the more beautiful world of tomorrow, the promises of pleasure and rest, the remover of pain. So our new Romantics flee to the look of Science with the passion that Delacroix fled to a Byronic Arabia and to a Goethe Gothic, or Gauguin to Tahiti: the Romantic escape.

Charlotte Willard quotes one young sculptor as saying that, "Formica is a skin that relieves the object of its history." Pure Romantic tactic. History, says Stephan Daedalus, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake. But Joyce's irony is that Stephen speaks as a character in a novel based on the Odyssey, and Telemachus was not trying to escape to the past, but to settle an unruly home situation by discovering his father.

Of course, it is unfair by confronting artists to imply a competition where none exists (even if notions of a Jihad against the Daddies is not far from the thoughts of some eager friends and relations of the New; artists, however, are not responsible for their promotion). The fact that Nakian's work makes that of, say, Robert Morris, Frank Stella or Robert Grosvenor seem Romantic is not a criticism of their admirable accomplishments. After a period of extreme intellectuality among artists, such as the one in which Abstract-Expressionist painting and Reuben Nakian's sculpture has roots, one expects the artists who follow to be attracted to the intuitive, the mystical, the irrational. Art-school art-education (plus over-exposure to the art-chat of elders relaxing in bars) will bring on art-fatigue. And further reactions to the cool reaction can be expected. If there is anything new in American art of the mid-1960s, it is its particular openness. Styles co-exist, interpenetrate, revive, do anything except follow dogmas. And while Americans should be grateful for this extraordinary display of sustained energy, they should also realize that in becoming open, art also has become increasingly vulnerable.

This writer, however, this summer, is especially grateful to the Museum of Modern Art for having, at long last, given Reuben Nakian the generous exhibition he deserves. Beautifully selected by Frank O'Hara, with assists from Bill Berkson and from Nakian's tireless champion Charles Egan, the show brings back to the center of attention the wonderful possibilities of an art committed to the serious idea of producing masterpieces. We can marvel at the potential of the artist's intellect—especially that non-verbal center of the brain working through a man's hands to bring a solid form into being with a conviction that illuminates his concept of art, of the artist and of art history.

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THE SHOOTING OF ANDY WARHOL

(A Historical Poem in the Manner of William McGonagall)

by

the eel

to Calvin Tomkins

with best wishes

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1. I Heard Andy Screaming

'Twas on the third of June and in the year of 1968

When the king of the underground, Andy Warhol, met a terrible fate

Shot down in his studio on Union Square West by a lesbian it is said

While others say she was no lesbian, she was just not quite right in the head

"Andy" was talking on the telephone to "Viva" at the time

When in walked Valerie Solanis and with a .32 caliber took aim

A barrage of bullets then echoed throughout the hall

("I heard Andy screaming," Viva did later recall)

And when the smoke cleared away, "Andy" lay on the floor

And Valerie was not present, having vanished through the door

It was the opinion of some that she might have been taking a "trip"

Whatever it was she was doing, she also managed to shoot Andy's business associate, Mario Amaya, of London, in the hip

The bullet that hit Andy went through his lung, his liver, and his spleen

He was rushed to Columbus Hospital - it was a very bad scene

There the surgeons, God bless them, labored five hours or more

Seeking the dwindling life of "Andy Warhol" to restore

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Meanwhile Valerie wandered the streets in a state of near
hysteria

Giving herself up at last to Patrolman William Schmalix of
the Times Square area

She was taken to the E. 21st St. station where on a charge
of felonious assault she was booked

While newspaper reporters and photographers and avid onlookers
looked

What they saw was a young lady of twenty-nine, some say
twenty-eight

Who were on her face an expression of terrible anguish and hate

"He tried to control my life! I am a flower child!" she cried

Even though she was a little old for a flower child, this
cannot be denied

Then the flashbulbs popped and a terrible din arose

As the reporters fired questions and noted down her clothes

Blue sneakers, tan slacks, turtleneck sweater, brown jacket

Nothing went unnoticed amidst the awful racket

"Where did you get the gun?" yelled "Howard Smith" of the Voice

"In Vermont," answered Valerie in a manner quite pleasant and
nice

"Who are you anyway?" another reporter cried

"I am really a writer," Valerie wildly replied

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Then she was taken away by a matron husky and blonde

While the reporters rushed out to meet their "deadline" bond

For the news of "Andy Warhol" had been flashed across the nation

And the presses stood ready to roll with the latest gory
sensation

With her hands cuffed behind her, o'er her wan face a mannish
hair-do fell

Valerie Solanis, address: "nowhere", unfortunate ne'er-do-well

"A girl in mild butch. Sensual, defiant. Poor mixed-up chick."

Such were the observations of East Village Other reporter,
Diane Derr-Derynek

In the meantime at Columbus Hospital there was considerable
confusion

As "Andy", struggling for life, was given transfusion after
transfusion

While in the lobby his "fans" wept with many a fearful moan

Rushing frantically now and then to the only telephone

"Jim" Fouratt was there and so was Taylor Mead

Ultraviolet, Leo Castelli, Ivan Karp and others of dazzling speed

Including a young man with a bathtub plug on a chain around his
neck

Lending a bizarre note to a scene that was otherwise circumspect

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For"Andy Warhol's Mother" was there with a babushka on her head

Sobbing in Slavic, collapsing, to a wheel chair she had been led

And great must have been her consternation when she did wildly
upward stare

At the young man bending over her with a bathtub plug on a
chain around his neck and long, extraneous hair

Oh, great must be the grief of the mothers of all the
nation

Reading and hearing about the things befalling the
"younger" generation

Rising so high in expectation and then coming down

When the muffled shots ring out in the Velvet Underground

And great must be the grief of the fathers of all the
land

Not knowing whether their daughters will turn out to be
ladies or men

Rising so high in expectation and then coming down

When the muffled shots ring out in the Velvet Underground

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2. Seam

Now, Valerie was arraigned next day before Judge David Getzoff
While all these who were present sat there with their hats off
"Warhol deserved what he got!" was her vivid exclamation
Whereupon she was quickly hustled off to Bellevue Hospital for psychiatric examination

Oh, sad is the case history of Valerie Solanis, to wit:
Born in Atlantic City on April 9, nineteen hundred and thirty-six
Beaten by her maternal grandfather with a belt at the age of five
She stubbornly stood there laughing, at all costs refusing to cry

Eldest of two daughters was Solanis, Valerie
Her younger sister, "Judy", now living in the state of California so free
"I do not wish to talk about my sister," was her message to the press
Sending word through her husband, a Mr. Monday, from whom she is separated, alas

And, alas, some time in the '40s the parents were separated, too
Dorothy and Louis Solanis, who had promised to be true
The mother moved to Washington where in 1949 or somewhat sooner
She married Edward Frank (Red) Moran, a former Newburgh, N.Y. piano-tuner

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Valerie was thirteen when "Red" Moran moved in with his piano-
tuner's gear

And from the very first moment Red felt a strange kind of fear

Her ~~x~~ "persistent questions" bugged him, so he swears

Also the way she hung head down from the railing at the top of
the stairs

One day she cut off her hair, after which she ran into Judy's
room and threw her things around

Then, running downstairs to the kitchen, she turned the garbage
pail upside down

Liberally afflicted with "tantrums" was this wild little elf

Sometimes when she worked in the basement, she could be heard
talking to herself

When Valerie ran away from Holy Cross Academy she was placed
in public school

There she got mostly straight A's, proving she was no fool

However, at 15, she became "involved with a sailor", said a
friend

And from that time on, so the story goes, she was "pretty much
against men"

"A boy put some tacks on her chair," a high school classmate
insists

"And Valerie turned around and hit him with her fists."

"Quite often she was the brunt of jokes" (a loner sad and blue)

"Terribly bright - and always decent," this was said of her too

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At the University of Maryland Valerie did very well indeed

Making "Psi Chi", honor society in psychology, at a B-average speed

Wearing "jeans" it is true, but to prove she was no "spook"

She sometimes had a beer with a friend named Douglas Mook

Thence she transferred to the University of Minnesota Graduate School of Psychology in the fall of '58

Where to earn 4 A's and 2 B's it was her kindly fate

However, when along in the "Land o' Lakes" came the spring of '59

Valerie dropped out, disappearing for quite some time

The next ten years are vague but such are the wonders of heaven

That when Valerie next appears, it is in the Hotel Chelsea Class of '67

A friend of Maurice Girodias of Paris Olympia Press fame

And author of S.C.U.M., manifesto of the Society for Cutting up men

In "Andy's" movie, I, A Man, she had already appeared

And she seemed, as they say, to be "making it", even though a perilous course she had steered

When suddenly, without explanation, out of the Hotel Chelsea she was thrown

Landing on the cold, hard sidewalk with many a piteous moan

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From that time on, they say, she seemed"not quite right in
the head"

Writing letters to the "Chelsea" addressed to "Ciredias, the
Toad"

Muttering to herself and weeping briny tears as on the harsh
curbstone she sat

Eating alone like a waif at the Twenty-third Street Automat

"Andy", too, she accused of trying to "steal her stuff"

As she freaked out at a "Village" party while her friends cried
out, "Enough!"

"Enough?" screamed Valerie. "He is a goddamed liar and a cheat."

And the next thing we know she is headed for Union Square West
with a gun in her pocket, her face as white as a sheet

Oh, great must be the grief of the mothers of all the
nation

Reading and hearing about the things befalling the
"younger" generation

Rising so high in expectation and then coming down

When the muffled shots ring out in the Velvet Underground

And great must be the grief of the fathers of all the
land

Not knowing whether their daughters will turn out to be
ladies or men

Rising so high in expectation and then coming down

As the muffled shots ring out in the Velvet Underground

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3. Childhood, Boyhood & Youth

Now, Andy's parents were Czechoslovakian immigrants who came
to America in 1921

To the 'land of liberty' to seek their fortune, as many others
have done

And it was in McKeesport, Pa., on August 8 of 1931

That "Andy" was born - of three boys he was the middle one

From an early age, 'tis said, he showed considerable artistic
flair

Drawing pictures of houses and trees and birds flying in the air

And then, at the age of nine, tragedy struck when his father died

Yet "Andy's" natural talent could not be denied

Then tragedy again in the form of "St. Vitus Dance" struck
young Andy

As a result, he explained, of eating too much candy

Yet through all these sorrows the Warholas struggled bravely on

Looking forward to the coming of a new and better dawn

'Twas at Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh that Andy revealed his
great talent

Impressing classmates and teachers alike with a spirit creative
and gallant

Graduating in 1949 to the great city of "New York" he went

Like many another young lad to "make it" firmly intent

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At first as a department store window dresser young Andy
faithfully worked

And it was seen at once by those around him that he never
grumbled or shirked

Then to "advertising specialties" he turned his considerable skill

Mastering the new "media" with staunch determination and will

Abruptly then did Andy a "Campbell Soup Can" paint

Causing some people to cheer, others to fall in a faint

For it was a "new thing" he had done, something that had never
been done before

And all around the town it caused a considerable uprear

Nevertheless, even while the "art critics" roared and thundered

"Andy" calmly signed "Brillo boxes" with his name, selling them
for thirteen hundred

Oh, great was the consternation in art circles throughout the
land

As "Pop Art" was born, mainly from Andy Warhol's hand

Then to "underground movies" did Andy turn his attention

Making films on subjects "polite society" does not care to
mention

Yes, in many of his productions nudity was rife

As Andy boldly revealed his "intimately directed" life

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Then along came "LSD" and although Andy did not indulge
He noted the effects it had, on those who around him did bulge
Forthwith the famous psychedelic "light show" was born
Proving that genius, unleashed, knows no restrictions or bounds

Oh, great was the fame of "Andy Warhol" during the miraculous dazzling sixties
As a galaxy of "superstars" 'round him gathered, all with their own foibles and fixities
"Baby Jane Holzer", "Edie Sedgwick", and "Ivy Nicholson" were there
Followed by "International Velvet", "Viva", and "Ingrid Superstar"

At "The Factory" each day they gathered to whistle and sing
Whilst new thoughts in the mind of "Andy Warhol" took form and then took wing
In dark glasses, leather jacket, his "family" he calmly surveyed
As the cameras ground out "new products" that were to be purveyed

How happy were those days that now seem so long ago!
When everything seemed bathed in a day-glo underglow
And the "factory hands" were glad, industriously loving one another
While Mrs. Warhol, with whom Andy lived in their apartment on Lexington Ave. painted pictures, signing them "Andy Warhol's Mother."

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Then came the fateful day when "The Factory" moved downtown
to "33 Union Square West" where the Con-Ed clock looks down
Then came the awful moment - some say 'twas caused by sin
When the elevator doors slid open, and Valerie Solanis walked in

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4. Conclusion

'Twas on the third of June, at approximately 4:30 P.M.
The sun was shining gently through the sixth floor windows grim
As Fred Hughes, Paul Morrissey, Mario Amaya, and Andy their heads together leaned
Talking "business" at The Factory - it was just an average scene

Then pandemonium reigned as three loud shots were fired
And Andy cried, "Valerie, don't do it!" in a voice with terror inspired
Too late - gravely wounded he to the floor did fall
Uttering the piercing scream that "Viva" did later recall

Valerie then turned on Amaya as toward a back room he did flee
Shooting him in the "hip" with cool demonic glee
Amaya kept on going, breaking the door latch with his rush
As over the stricken face of "Andy" there fell a terrible hush

Paul Morrisey was in the bathroom when the shots and the screams rang out
And he ran to a "projection window" to see what it was all about
There he saw Amaya holding the door closed with all his might and main
While Valerie assaulted it, trying to kick it in

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Then, to his horror, Paul saw Valerie turn on Fred Hughes,
his assistant

Who promptly fell on his knees, crying out, "Don't! I'm
innocent!"

She was about to pull the trigger when the elevator doors
opened for the second time that day

And with a contemptuous sneer at the "men" Valerie vanished
away

Jumping quickly to his feet, "Fred" put in a call for police
and ambulance

As Amaya cautiously stuck his head out of the door, inquiring
if that were the end of the disturbance

In the meantime "Andy" on the floor in great delirium lay

Crying weakly, "I can't. I can't." It was all he was able to
say

At this moment Billy Name, the photographer, in came leaping

And rushed to "Andy" to comfort him, the while loudly weeping

Mistaking it for laughter, Andy was heard to mumble,

"Billy, don't make me laugh." Then into a "coma" he did tumble

Ah, friends, there was little cause for laughter that terrible
day in June

It had all happened too suddenly - it was all over too soon

Quickly a general alarm throughout the city for Valerie was
spread

Because it was feared by many that "Andy" might soon be dead

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The long vigil that followed was filled with hesitation
As dark storm clouds rolled across the mighty nation
Late, late at night on Union Square you could easily see
The wan lights of "The Factory" flickering eerily

For nigh onto a week Andy in "critical condition" lay
Then "His condition is improving," you could hear the "Sisters" say
Finally, thanks be to Heaven, he rallied and from "intensive "care" was taken
While everyone breathed easier who by these horrible events had been shaken

Oh, great must be the grief of the mothers of all the nation
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[redacted]

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NOTES

1. I Heard Andy Screaming

1. 'Twas on the third of June...

"Andy Warhol, 36-year-old pop artist, maker of underground movies and darling of the avant-garde set, was critically wounded at 4:30 p.m. yesterday when one of his female film stars barged into his sixth-floor Union Square office and, without a word, fired a barrage of bullets at Warhol and a business associate." Frank Faso, Martin McLaughlin and Richard Henry. Daily News. June 4.

"Pop artist Andy Warhol fought for his life today, after being gunned down in his own studio by a woman who had acted in one of his underground films." Joseph Mancini with Joseph Feury and Jay Levin. New York Post. June 4.

"Andy Warhol, the artist who brought a bewildering new dimension to American pop culture through his films, sculptures and paintings, was shot and critically wounded in his film studio yesterday afternoon." Richard F. Shepard. New York Times. June 4.

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"'Actress Shoots Andy Warhol!' shrieked a headline in the New York Daily News. The New York Post bannered it, 'Andy Warhol Fights For Life'. The story was pure pulp pop, told in the cliche tabloid prose that Andy adored. What's more, it was all of a piece with the real live Warhol world." Grace Glueck. Times. June 9.

"SCENE 1 - 33 UNION SQUARE WEST, LOBBY -- A crowd of passers by stands in front of the building. Inspector McGuire is giving a statement to the press. He leaves and we wait. Wait for the questioning of witnesses that is taking place upstairs. We wait for the police lab to come in, examine and photograph the scene. A girl reporter asks if Valerie was Andy's lover. The reporters want to know who Valerie is, what she looks like, and we get conflicting descriptions. No one can spell Solanis correctly, and every other detail of the shooting seems to have just as many variations. She shot him once. She might have shot two or three times. No, just once. She rang for the elevator and as it took time arriving, she turned around and shot again. It really sounds like a Western." Diane Derr-Dorynek. The East Village Other. June 14.

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2. the king of the underground...

"the Maharishi of Madness..." Peter Coutros. Daily News. June 5.

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3. others say she was no lesbian...

"She was a manhater, not a lesbian, but consumed with a passionate loathing of men." Howard Smith. The Village Voice. June 6.

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4. I heard Andy screaming...

"Viva said she had been talking with Warhol by phone when he was shot. 'I heard five shots and a lot of screaming,' Viva realted. 'I heard Andy screaming. I thought it was a joke, then the phone was dropped'." Daily News. June 4.

"The girl who was talking with Mr. Warhol on the telephone, Viva, was born Susan Hoffman. She identified herself in a recent article in New York magazine as one of nine children of a Syracuse lawyer...

40 pages of notes follow, bringing the story up to date, May, 1969.

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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	TOMKINS	IV.C.37

JOTTINGS OF NEW YORK

A Descriptive Poem

Oh mighty City of New York! you are wonderful to behold,
Your buildings are magnificent, the truth be it told,
They were the only thing that seemed to arrest my eye,
Because many of them are thirteen storeys high.

And as for Central Park, it is lovely to be seen,
Especially in the summer season when its shrubberies and
trees are green;
And the Burns' statue is there to be seen,
Surrounded by trees, on the beautiful sward so green;
Also, Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott,
Which by Englishmen and Scotchmen will ne'er be forgot.

There the people on the Sabbath-day in thousands resort,
All loud in conversation and searching for sport,
Some of them viewing the menagerie of wild beasts there,
And also beautiful black swans, I do declare.

And there's beautiful boats to be seen there,
And the joyous shouts of the children do rend the air,
While the boats sail along with them o'er Lohengrin Lake,
And the fare is five cents for children and adults ten is all
they take.

And there's also summer-house shades and merry-go-rounds,
And with the merry laughter of the children the Park resounds
During the livelong Sabbath day,
Enjoying the merry-go-round play.

Then there's the elevated railroads, about five storeys high,
Which the inhabitants can see and hear night and day
passin g by,
Oh! such a mass of people daily do throng,
No less than five hundred thousand daily pass along,
And all along the City you can get for five cents,
And, believe me, among the passengers there are few discontent.

And the tops of the houses are all flat,
And in the warm weather the people gather to chat,
Besides on the house-tops they dry their clothes,
And also many people all night on the house-tops repose.

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	TOMKINS	IV.C.37

Jottings of New York.

And numerous ships and steamboats are there to be seen,
Sailing along the East River Water so green;
'Tis certainly a most beautiful sight
To see them sailing o'er the smooth water day and night.

And Brooklyn Bridge is a very great height,
And fills the stranger's heart with wonder at first sight,
But with all its loftiness, I venture to say,
For beauty it cannot surpass the new Railway Bridge of the
Silvery Tay.

And there's also ten thousand rumsellers there,
Oh! wonderful to think, I do declare!
To accomodate the people of that city therein,
And to encourage them to commit all sorts of sin.

And on the Sabbath-day, ye will see many a man
Going for beer with a tin can,
And seems proud to be seen carrying home the beer
To treat his neighbours and family dear.

Then at night numbers of the people dance and sing,
Making the walls of their houses to ring
With their songs and dancing on Sabbath night,
Which I witnessed with disgust, and fled from the sight.

And with regard to New York and the sights I did see,
One street in Dundee is more worth to me,
And, believe me, the morning I sailed from New York
For Bonnie Dundee, my heart it felt as light as a cork.

--William McGonagall

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The broadsheet doggerel of Wm. McGonagall "poet and tragedian" - in fact a Dundee handloom weaver born in 1830 - has been the standard reading of generations of laughter-loving Scotsmen. "The Tay Bridge Disaster," "The Death of Lord and Lady Dalhousie," "Attempted Assassination of the Queen," "Saving a Train" - these and the rest of them are immortal favourites. He was, as Punch says, "the greatest Bad Verse writer of his age."

--Poetic Gems. Wm. McGonagall. Dundee: David Winter & Son Ltd. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd.

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