

# The Museum of Modern Art

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## THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART SENDS MAJOR ANDY WARHOL PRINT RETROSPECTIVE TO CENTRAL EUROPE

May 2, 1990.....Richard E. Oldenburg, director of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, announced today that the Museum has organized a major survey of Andy Warhol's printed art for a yearlong Central European tour. The exhibition THE PRINTS OF ANDY WARHOL was conceived as a result of a request from the Národní Galeri in Prague to present the works of this major American artist, the son of immigrants from Czechoslovakia, in the country of his ancestors.

THE PRINTS OF ANDY WARHOL has enabled the Museum to reactivate its relations with other Central European institutions in Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia and, for the first time, to extend its reach to the German Democratic Republic. Scheduled to begin after its opening at the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain in Jouy-en-Josas, France, on June 15, 1990, the five-country tour will provide the public with a rare opportunity to see the actual works of an artist known in these countries mainly by reputation and through reproduction.

THE PRINTS OF ANDY WARHOL and its accompanying publication have been supported by a generous grant from the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art. The exhibition has been organized by Riva Castleman, director, Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, and organized for circulation in

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Europe under the auspices of The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Over eighty-five screenprints are included in the exhibition, beginning with the artist's first published work of 1962, featuring the famous Pop art images of the following decades, and concluding with his final commissioned portfolio, planned but not completed at his death in 1987. Images range from Warhol's most famous portraits of Marilyn Monroe, Mao, Jackie Kennedy, and Mick Jagger to the familiar Campbell's soup cans, flowers, and comic strip heroes of Superman and Mickey Mouse; from lesser known images of Hammer and Sickles, Electric Chairs, and Skulls to the artist's final meditation on the space age, the work Moonwalk (1987). It also shows examples of prints--a lithograph, photo engraving, and rubber stamp--that appeared in books. These works reveal how replication of the printed image was the essence of Warhol's art and how his prints were at the heart of the flourishing of American printmaking in the 1960s.

Ms. Castleman has written, "It is suggested that the widespread recognition of Warhol's work is the inevitable result of his attitude toward its creation. Warhol the Pop Artist was, first of all, Warhol the Commercial Artist, and with the publication of large editions of prints, he became the chief executive of Business Art. He clarified a major aspect of the status of prints, not primarily as art for the masses but as objects for mass recognition and economic return. As such, they have entered the consciousness of the peoples of many nations and become some of the most memorable and powerful images of our times."

Andy Warhol, whose name has come to signify American Pop Art, built this popular perception upon the unique impression he made, not only in his

contrived personal appearance and manner, but in his preference for printing most of his art. In his early drawings, he imprinted inked lines onto a second sheet by blotting them; in his paintings, he chose to create his images by screenprinting enlarged and overexposed photographs on canvas. Printed on paper by the same method, the portraits of the famous and selected objects of fear, lust, and the ordinary became, in Ms. Castleman's words, multiplied, pervasive, cultural currency.

Andy Warhol was born in 1928 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, of parents who had immigrated in the early twentieth century from what is now Czechoslovakia. He graduated from Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1949 after pursuing a course in commercial art, which included studies in printing methods. As a student he also worked in a store where he was able to study the most current fashion magazines. From childhood he accumulated cartoon and movie magazines, and he continued to collect them after his move to New York City upon graduation. Throughout most of his life he was an obsessive collector of objects, and his studio attracted all types of persons. Warhol always had assistance in his studio, whether for drawing advertisements, making movies, or screenprinting his paintings and prints on paper. In all cases, he was the creative director and was directly involved in at least one part of the production of any work. He frequently asked for ideas, and after he was almost killed in 1968 by a woman who had occasionally been one of the studio crowd, his work was usually made on commission. In February 1987, he died, as he had often feared, in a hospital, following a routine operation.

Waldo Rasmussen, director of the Museum's International Program, states, "The Museum has had a longstanding history of organizing exhibitions to circulate to countries in Central Europe, beginning with the exhibition MODERN

ART IN THE U.S.A.: SELECTIONS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK, which was presented in Belgrade in 1954. Organized in cooperation with the United States Information Agency, this major painting and sculpture exhibition was the first introduction of modern art anywhere in Central Europe. Since then, the International Program has circulated more than twenty exhibitions of drawings, prints, photography, architecture and design, and film to this region. In the 1960s, we arranged for a collection of art books to be distributed to art centers and libraries in Poland, and were actively involved in the Art in Embassies Program, which enabled original American art to be seen in American embassies in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia, as well as the U.S.S.R. With THE PRINTS OF ANDY WARHOL, we are pleased to resume an active cultural role in this part of the world with an exhibition of one of the most important artists of our time."

After its showing in France concludes on September 2, 1990, the exhibition will travel to the Národní Galerie v Praze, Prague, Czechoslovakia (September 24 - November 17, 1990); the Albertina of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, German Democratic Republic (December 10, 1990 - January 20, 1991); the Mücsarnok Palace of Exhibitions, Budapest, Hungary (February 11 - March 24, 1991); the Muzej Savremene Umetnosti, Belgrade, Yugoslavia (April 15 - May 26, 1991); and the Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, Warsaw, Poland (June 17 - July 28, 1991).

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