

## ANDY WARHOL EXHIBITS a glittering alternative

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a glittering alternative  
September 25, 2020 through  
May 30, 2021



After Andy Warhol

Facsimile of *Silver Clouds* created by Andy Warhol in 1966, Refabricated by the Andy Warhol Museum,  
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### Exhibition Artist, Installation Artist, or Closeted Curator After All?

On September 25, 2020, mumok dedicates two simultaneous exhibitions to the phenomenon that is Andy Warhol (b. August 6, 1928 in Pittsburgh, PA; d. February 22, 1987 in New York City). Instead of presenting long-known classics, mumok will focus on rarely shown works and look behind the facade of the famous Pop Art icon to rediscover Warhol's capabilities as an innovative curator and exhibition artist.

*ANDY WARHOL EXHIBITS a glittering alternative* and the homage to Warhol's groundbreaking project *RAID THE ICEBOX 1 with Andy Warhol* constitute the very first exemplary overview of the polymath artist's exhibition practices without letting his early and late works fall by the wayside. This cross section opens new perspectives on the myriad media Warhol used and shows that his modes of presentation should be understood as an essential part of his oeuvre.

The exhibition will demonstrate that Warhol already experimented with artistic strategies on paper in the 1950s and perfected them over the following three decades in various spatial situations. Thus, the exhibition format in Warhol's oeuvre presents itself not so much as a final "work" than as an artistic medium. While the traditional concept of a "work" corresponds to the static idea of the autonomous art object in space, Warhol's solo exhibitions approximate a site-specific installation. The exhibition functions as a temporarily isolated module that varies according to context and involves the viewer as an interpreting agent in the scene. Therefore, the question of whether Warhol appears as an illustrator, painter, sculptor, filmmaker, installation artist, or conceptual artist is irrelevant. More critical is the reciprocal relationship between production and presentation. Warhol goes beyond the individual image, relativizing it, and rather than confining himself to creating and showing, he aims to give an all-encompassing presentation that extends from the site-specific hang in series and the exhibition catalog—which itself becomes a work of art—all the way to the opening ceremony. Instead of highlighting a single aspect of his work—as has been done all too often in the past—this exhibition aims to focus on Warhol's modular and installative work process, showing more than two hundred exhibits.

Few people know that Warhol forbade the presentation of his early works—i.e., works created before 1962—already during his lifetime and controlled the way they were perceived in a very deliberate manner. Starting with the *Campbell's Soup Can* show at the Ferus Gallery in 1962, Warhol's follow-up exhibits in the early 1960s each focused on the presentation of a single serial subject: *Campbell's Soup Cans*, *Brillo Boxes*, *Flowers*, *Disasters*, and *Celebrity Portraits*. Warhol created an image, geared to the public, which has successfully shaped his reception to this day. An image that is in great need of a contemporary perspective.

## **Not Another Warhol Retrospective . . .**

*ANDY WARHOL EXHIBITS* peeks behind the artist's aforementioned public image, placing aspects of Warhol's cosmos at center stage that have thus far gone virtually unexamined. Two sides of his "dual persona"—the much-quoted staged persona on the one hand and the hidden one, barely noticed by the public, on the other—will be contrasted on two levels of the mumok building. The entrance level will deal with Warhol's curatorial intentions and recurring motifs/abstractions of the 1950s. On display will be the Blotted Line prints and drawings exploring the male body, drag practices, and homoerotic symbols and gestures—a range of topics that would occupy the artist until his death. The exhibition will span works from Warhol's first show, *Fifteen Drawings Based on the Writings of Truman Capote* (1952) to never before presented marbled paper sculptures (1954), rarely shown drag drawings (1953), and book projects such as *In the Bottom of My Garden* (1958).

The selected works illustrate Warhol's early examination of iconographically defined series—especially his interest in gender performance variations—as well as the development of a specific visual vocabulary that keeps cropping up in various contexts. From such a perspective, Andy Warhol's early work can no longer be pigeonholed as purely "commercial."

The second level turns the spotlight on Warhol's exhibition practices from the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, concentrating on the presentation of individual work series. This section addresses the densely interwoven nature of the artist's work and mode of presentation.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a comprehensive scholarly publication containing new texts by Marianne Dobner, Naoko Kaltschmidt, Natalie Musteata, Neil Printz, Nina Schleif, and Jennifer Sichel, who approach Warhol's comprehensive exhibition-making history in vastly different ways.

Curated by Marianne Dobner

This exhibition was supported by the Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation.

*ANDY WARHOL EXHIBITS a glittering alternative* is part of mumok's thematic Warhol focus, which is conceived as a trilogy. The two other parts are *DEFROSTING THE ICEBOX. Guesting at mumok: The Hidden Treasures of the Collection of Greek and Roman Antiquities of the Kunsthistorisches Museum and Weltmuseum Wien* and *MISFITTING TOGETHER. Serial Formations of Pop Art, Minimal Art, and Conceptual Art.*

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