



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **From the Tower: Andy Warhol**

**San Francisco Art Institute unveils its archive of Andy Warhol screenprints for the first time, along with a selection of the artist's Polaroids and photographs**

**Gallery exhibition: February 20 – March 24, 2019  
Opening Reception: Friday, February 22, 2019; 5-8pm**

**(San Francisco, CA, February 11, 2019)** In 2007, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts celebrated its 20th anniversary by making an unprecedented gift of over 28,500 photographs by Andy Warhol to educational institutions across the United States, including San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI). More than 180 college and university museums, galleries, and art collections throughout the nation each received a curated selection of 100 original Polaroid photographs and 50 gelatin silver prints. By focusing on educational institutions, the Foundation hoped to spark interest, discussion, and future scholarship about the essential role photography played in Warhol's artistic production and to draw attention to the lifelong commitment he had to the medium.

The Foundation followed up its Photographic Legacy Program with another round of gifts in 2013 to those same schools, this time of Warhol's celebrated screenprints.

This spring in the Main Gallery of its new Fort Mason Campus, SFAI will exhibit for the first time the group of seven original prints it received as part of this generous gift, alongside forty of the Polaroids and six of the photographic prints the school now holds in its fascinating archive. This is the inaugural exhibition of a new series, *From the Tower*, that explores artworks, images, objects, and stories living within the SFAI archive, housed in the school's historic tower.

The screenprints on view include *The Nun, Ingrid Bergman* (1983); *Annie Oakley* (1986); *Flash-November 22, 1963(JFK)#35* (1968); *Joseph Beuys in Memoriam* (1986); *Hammer and Sickle (Feldman & Schellmann II. 161-164)* (1977); *Sitting Bull A70 (FS IIIA.70)* (1986); and *Kachina Dolls (FS II.381)* (1986).

The photographs on display—portraits, celebrity snapshots, nudes, painting ideas, party photos, still lifes, and outdoor scenes—demonstrate the range of Warhol's aesthetic interests and the reach of his curious and far-roaming eye. Warhol often used these photographs as the

basis for commissioned portraits, silkscreen paintings, drawings, and prints. The Polaroid portraits reveal the artist's profound and frank engagement with the personality in front of his camera – be it a celebrity, a beauty, a tycoon, or a socialite. The selection on view includes portraits of such household names as Sylvester Stallone, Debbie Harry, and Howdy Doody, as well as friends and strangers. The gelatin silver photographs reveal Warhol's extraordinary compositional skill, his eye for detail, and his compulsive desire to document the time in which he lived.

“SFAI is grateful to the Warhol Foundation for this extraordinary gift, which has contributed to making our archive an unparalleled resource for students, faculty, and the public,” says SFAI President Gordon Knox. “In advance of the wide-ranging Warhol retrospective coming to SFMOMA later this spring, this show gives people the chance for an intimate look at this iconoclastic artist's process.”

*SFAI's Exhibitions and Public Programs are made possible by the generosity of donors and sponsors. Program support in 2018-19 is provided by the Harker Fund of The San Francisco Foundation, Institute of Museums and Library Services, Grants for the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Creative Work Fund, Koret Foundation, Pirkle Jones Fund, Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation, and Fort Point Beer Company. Ongoing support is provided by the McBean Distinguished Lecture and Residency Fund, The Buck Fund, and the Visiting Artist Fund of the SFAI Endowment.*

## **About Andy Warhol**

More than twenty years after his death, Andy Warhol remains one of the most influential figures in contemporary art and culture. Born Andy Warhola in 1928 in a working-class neighborhood of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Warhol developed a rare neurological disorder at an early age and found solace in popular celebrity magazines and DC comic books, imagery he would return to years later.

Following his graduation with a degree in Pictorial Design from the Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1949, Warhol moved to New York and dropped the 'a' from his name. In New York, he garnered top assignments as a commercial artist with clients from *Vogue* to Tiffany & Co. Warhol turned to painting and drawing in the 1950s, with a first solo show in 1952 at the Hugo Gallery.

Warhol produced most of his iconic work during the turbulent 1960s and into the 1970s. Building on the emerging Pop Art movement, Warhol started painting readily found, mass-produced objects. Operating out of a silver-painted and foil-draped studio nicknamed The Factory, Warhol also began to embrace film and video producing a series of films now considered avant-garde cinema classics.

In 1968, Warhol suffered a nearly fatal gun-shot wound from aspiring playwright and radical feminist author, Valerie Solanas. The traumatic attempt on his life did not, however, slow down his output or his ability to infiltrate the worlds of fashion, music, media, and celebrity. He co-founded *Interview Magazine*, signed with a modeling agency, developed television programs for MTV, and more. He also developed a strong business in commissioned portraits.

Warhol died in 1987.

### **About The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts**

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts was established in 1987. In accordance with Andy Warhol's will, its mission is the advancement of the visual arts.

The Foundation's objective is to foster innovative artistic expression and the creative process by encouraging and supporting cultural organizations that in turn, directly or indirectly, support artists and their work. The Foundation values the contribution these organizations make to artists and audiences and to society as a whole by supporting, exhibiting and interpreting a broad spectrum of contemporary artistic practice.

### **About San Francisco Art Institute**

Founded in 1871, SFAI is one of the country's oldest and most prestigious institutions of higher education in the practice and study of contemporary art. As a diverse community of working artists and scholars, SFAI provides students with a rigorous education in the arts and preparation for a life in the arts through an immersive studio environment, an integrated liberal arts and art history curriculum, and critical engagement with the world. Committed to educating artists who will shape the future of art, culture, and society, SFAI fosters creativity and original thinking in an open, experimental, and interdisciplinary context.

### **General Information**

San Francisco Art Institute – Fort Mason's galleries are open to the public Wednesday - Sunday 11am - 7pm and are located on Pier 2 within Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture, 2 Marina Blvd., San Francisco, CA.

Galleries are free to the public. For more information, the public may visit [sfai.edu](http://sfai.edu) or call (415) 749-4563.

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Nina Sazevich  
Public Relations  
415.752.2483  
[nina@sazevichpr.com](mailto:nina@sazevichpr.com)

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