the warhol:

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13 most beautiful...songs for andy warhol's *screen tests* project overview

Composed by Dean Wareham & Britta Phillips

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All rights reserved. Andy Warhol Screen Test: Jane Holzer (1964)

16mm film, black and white, silent, 4 minutes at 16 frames per second

Project Credit Line

13 Most Beautiful…Songs for Andy Warhol's Screen Tests, a project jointly commissioned by the Andy Warhol Museum and Pittsburgh Cultural Trust for

The Andy Warhol Museum

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One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

the Pittsburgh International Festival of Firsts 2008.

Project Description

The Andy Warhol Museum is proud to announce its debut performance commission involving the Museum's film collection, titled *13 Most Beautiful…Songs for Andy Warhol's Screen Tests.* This project, which will premiere in Pittsburgh on October 24 & 25, 2008, was jointly commissioned by the Andy Warhol Museum and Pittsburgh Cultural Trust for the Pittsburgh International Festival of Firsts 2008. Songwriters, Dean Wareham & Britta Phillips, formerly of Luna and currently with Dean & Britta, have composed music for a selection of Warhol's four-minute, silent film portraits, the *Screen Tests*, which will take the form of a multimedia performance featuring large scale video projection of the *Screen Tests* above the musicians performing live on stage. This project has been developed by
Ben Harrison, Associate Curator for Performance, with Geralyn Huxley, Curator of Film and Video, and Greg Pierce, Assistant Curator of Film and Video of The Andy Warhol Museum.

Screen Tests

Andy Warhol's *Screen Tests*, which number approximately 500, are revealing portraits of hundreds of different individuals, shot between 1964 and 1966. The subjects—both famous and anonymous— were visitors to his studio, the Factory. They were asked to pose, lit with a strong keylight, and filmed by Warhol with his stationary 16mm Bolex camera on silent, black and white, 100-foot rolls of film. Each screen test lasted only as long as the roll of film. The resulting 2¾

minute films were projected in slow motion so that each lasted four minutes.

Many of the *Screen Tests* were included in shifting compilations such as the flatteringly-titled *13 Most Beautiful Women, 13 Most Beautiful Boys,* and *50 Fantastics and 50 Personalities*, which were often projected in different versions, depending on who was in the audience or who Warhol wanted to please. The *Screen Tests* were also used, as were other Warhol films, as part of the light show for his 1966 multi-media happening, the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable*. In these shows The Velvet Underground and Nico performed their ear-splitting music, accompanied by Superstar dancers bathed in light from large projections of slides and films.

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Photo by Michael Lavine

Singer/guitarist **Dean Wareham** is, according to the New York Times, "a respected cultural figure who cut a wide swath through the '90s independent music scene." Often sounding like a depressed slacker, Wareham has inspired a number of indie rockers to express their sadness with a wistful tenor. Wareham was born in Wellington, New Zealand, but moved to New York City in 1977. Wareham attended Harvard University where he earned a BA in Social Studies. After spending a year in Germany, Wareham returned to Boston, MA, in 1987 and formed Galaxie 500 with his high school and college buddies Damon Krukowski (drums) and Naomi Yang (bass). Galaxie 500 released their first album, Today, in 1988, and were then signed to Rough Trade Records internationally. Although Galaxie 500 received little mainstream recognition, the band's languorous, narcotic rhythms — recalling the Velvet Underground and Joy Division — had a significant impact in shaping alternative subgenres such as shoegazer and slowcore. Wareham recorded three albums with Galaxie 500 before leaving the group in 1991. Wareham then moved back to New York City, releasing the EP Anesthesia and contributing vocals to Mercury Rev's "Car Wash Hair." A year later Wareham started Luna with Justin Harwood (bass) of the Chills and Stanley Demeski (drums) from the Feelies. Named after Diane Keaton's character in the Woody Allen film Sleeper, Luna recorded five well-received albums for Elektra Records through the nineties, all were staples at college radio. In 1999 **Britta Phillips,** formerly of the UK-based shoegazer band Belltower, replaced Harwood on bass, and Luna recorded another two albums for the independent label Jetset. Luna played their final shows in 2004, and

Wareham and Phillips now perform as Dean & Britta. Together they have recorded two breezy albums of covers and originals, both produced by Tony Visconti, and have also been active scoring films, notably Noah Baumbach's acclaimed feature, The Squid & the Whale.

Warhol as Filmmaker

Andy Warhol is widely regarded as the most important artist of the second half of the 20th century, and he brought the vision of a successful artist to his filmmaking activities. In 1979, P. Adams Sitney wrote in *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde, 1943-1978*, that "Warhol came to the avant-garde cinema in a way no one else had…He was a fully developed artist in one medium, and he entered another, not as a dabbler, but with a total commitment. He immediately began to produce major cinema. For years he sustained that production with undiminished intensity, creating, in that time, as many major films as any of his contemporaries had in a lifetime." From 1963 to 1971, Warhol produced an oeuvre comprised of more than 4,000 reels of film, including 500 original, 33-minute sound reels, more than 800 original, 2½-minute silent reels, and 2,800 reels of outtakes and prints. Andy Warhol's film work is highly influential in the history of experimental film, and this influence is being recognized in many exhibitions and publications. His films have appeared in such exhibitions as *Other Rooms, Other Voices*, organized by the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, and *Andy Warhol* at the Queensland Museum of Modern Art in Brisbane, Australia.

The Andy Warhol Museum Film Collection

Between 1963 and 1972, Warhol produced approximately 1300 reels – or over

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200 hours – of original footage, in addition to other motion picture material, including unreleased films, various prints, and outtakes. In 1982, five years before he died, Andy Warhol agreed to allow the Whitney Museum of American Art in collaboration with The Museum of Modern Art in New York to retrieve his films from his studio, where they had been stored since he withdrew them from circulation in 1972, and begin a project to research and restore them with the intention of preserving them for future exhibition and study. The collaboration became The Andy Warhol Film Project, which continued after Warhol's death in 1987 and is still in progress, supported by funding from The Andy Warhol Foundation, Inc. for the Visual Arts. In 1997, the Foundation generously donated to the Warhol Museum the copyrights to all of the artist's film and video material, as well as his entire video collection. The original films were donated to The Museum of Modern Art. Warhol films are shown every day at The Andy Warhol Museum, allowing visitors to see them in the context of eight floors of his work -- drawings, paintings, prints, and photographs -- and material from his vast archives. Over twenty-five years after Warhol withdrew his films, they are now available in one place for enjoyment and research. Finally, after years of everyone just talking about the films, they can be seen and situated within a variety of cultural contexts so that a real understanding of their nature can begin.

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Notes on the Beauties

By Geralyn Huxley, curator of film and video, The Andy Warhol Museum

Warhol observed, "I've never met a person I couldn't call a beauty…I always hear myself saying, 'She's a beauty!' or 'He's a beauty!' or 'What a beauty!' but…if everybody's not a beauty, then nobody is."—*THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol: (From A to B and Back Again)*, 1975

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Richard Rheem

Richard Rheem, a handsome, affluent young man from Fullerton, California carried on an avid correspondence with Warhol after having met the artist in San Francisco in 1966. He eventually quit his job to move to New York and star in Warhol's films, even sharing his townhouse on the edge of Manhattan's Carnegie Hill, at 1342 Lexington Avenue for a brief time with the artist and his mother. He was in several films, only four of which are currently preserved——three *Screen Tests* and the memorable feature, *Mrs. Warhol*, in which he plays the twenty-sixth husband of a former bathing beauty (played by Warhol's mother, Julia).

Ann Buchanan

According to Callie Angell in her catalogue raisonné, *Andy Warhol Screen Tests*, Ann Buchanan was part of the Beat poetry set in California and New York, at one point sharing an apartment with Neal Cassady and Allen Ginsberg, who mentions her in his poems. Described on the film box that held her *Screen Test*, as the "Girl Who Cries a Tear," her portrait is one of the most memorable for her non-blinking tearful gaze, which Warhol proclaimed as "something wonderful marvelous."

Paul America

In *POPism: The Warhol Sixties*, Warhol describes how his friend, producer Lester Persky, "'discovered' Paul at the discotheque Ondine and brought him around to the Factory. Paul was unbelievably good-looking—like a comic-strip

drawing of Mr. America, clean-cut, handsome, very symmetrical (he seemed to be exactly six feet tall and weigh some nice round number). I don't remember how he got the name Paul America, unless it was because he was staying at the Hotel America on West 46th Street between Sixth and Seventh avenues, a super-funky midtown hotel that was the kind of place Lenny Bruce, say, stayed in…." In addition to this *Screen Test*, Paul Johnson, aka America, appeared in Warhol's film, *My Hustler* (1965), as well as an unreleased videotape portrait shot with a prototype Norelco camera in that year.

Edie Sedgwick

Edith Minturn Sedgwick, born in California to a rich, distinguished family, had had a difficult childhood, suffered a breakdown, and was abusing drugs even before she met Warhol in early 1965. Warhol was charmed by this "poor little rich girl" and made more than ten films featuring her in the short time she was at the Factory. He had wanted to make a film of an entire day of her life, and commented about her in his book *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, "One person in the 60s fascinated me more than anybody I had ever known. And the fascination I experienced was probably very close to a certain kind of love." In addition to the Warhol films, Edie is the subject of the film *Ciao! Manhattan* and the book *Edie: American Girl* by Jean Stein and George Plimpton.

Billy Name

In the early 1960s, Warhol regularly attended dance concerts at the Judson Church and met their lighting designer Billy Linich (later Billy Name), who he later invited to decorate his new studio on 47th Street with foil and silver paint.

Name stayed on at the Factory as an informal foreman and official photographer, as well as lighting designer for Warhol's films until 1969. Name was one of the few Warhol associates who were at the artist's studio when he was shot by Valerie Solanas on June 3, 1968. According to Warhol, Name's photos were "the only thing that ever came close" to capturing the feel of the 1960s Silver Factory.

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Susan Bottomly

Boston debutante Susan Bottomly was only seventeen when she was featured on the cover of *Mademoiselle* magazine in 1966, the same year she arrived at Warhol's Factory and was given her Superstar moniker, International Velvet. Although she is featured in several Warhol films, only *The Chelsea Girls* and her *Screen Test* are currently restored. In them, she is the Sixties-look incarnate: false eyelashes, thick, black eyeliner, long flipped hair with a towering tease and a fringe covering her eyebrows, and oversized dangling earrings.

Dennis Hopper

Well-known Hollywood actor Dennis Hopper, who worked with James Dean in the 1950s and directed *Easy Rider* in 1969, was one of the first collectors to acquire a Warhol's *Campbell's Soup* painting from their premiere show in Los Angeles in mid-1962. The next year he threw a party for Warhol when the artist went to California to exhibit his *Elvis* and *Liz* portraits. Hopper made a cameo appearance, dressed in a leopard-skin loin cloth, in Warhol's 1963 film, *Tarzan and Jane Regained…Sort Of*, shot during that visit to Los Angeles. Among Warhol's video *Factory Diaries* is an extensive interview with the actor, accompanied by his future wife, Daria Halprin, by Glenn O'Brien and Michael Netter for the February 1972 issue of *Interview* magazine. Warhol also painted portraits of him and also his former wife, Brooke Hayward Hopper in the early 1970s.

Mary Woronov

Mary Woronov studied at Cornell University before appearing in her first Warhol

film, *Hedy*, in 1965. She later became a "whip dancer" in Warhol's live multi-media show the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable*, reinforcing her powerful performance as the domineering Hanoi Hanna in *The Chelsea Girls* (1966). This pose set the tone for her future film persona, playing such roles as Calamity Jane in *Death Race 2000* (1975) and Miss Togar in *Rock 'n' Roll High School* (1979). She is a distinguished artist and writer, as well as a cult screen actress who has appeared in over 100 films.

Freddy Herko

Herko was a dancer and choreographer associated with the loosely-organized Judson Dance Theater, an integral part of the New York avant-garde dance scene that had been brewing since the 1950s. He appeared in Andy Warhol's early film *Haircut (No. 1)*, with Billy Name (then Billy Linich) and influential dance guru James Waring, in whose company he also danced. Warhol wrote that Herko was "the Judson dancer I was absolutely fascinated with" and included him in a number of films before he danced through an open window to his death in 1964.

Nico

Born Christa Päffgen in Germany, Nico was a model and actress who met Warhol in Paris in May 1965. When Warhol engaged the Velvet Underground after seeing them perform in Greenwich Village in late-December 1965, he almost immediately added Nico as a singer. She performed in Warhol's multi-media shows *Andy Warhol Up-tight* and *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable* through mid-1967. Noted for many love affairs with famous men, including Brian Jones and Bob Dylan, who wrote "I'll Keep It with Mine" for her in 1965,

Nico had a son with French actor Alain Delon, Ari Boulogne, who appears with her in a number of Warhol's films, including *The Chelsea Girls* (1966). Several of her eleven *Screen Tests* were used as background projections in *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable*. She had an extensive musical career after leaving the Factory and also appeared in many films by French director Philippe Garrel.

Ingrid Superstar

Smiling and unassuming, Ingrid Von Scheven was a perky blond who joined the Factory crowd as Edie's presence was diminishing. She fit in almost immediately and began appearing in many Warhol films and later wrote several brief, surprisingly astute "observations" of the Factory milieu. Affectionately, Warhol wrote that she was "just an ordinarily nice-looking girl from Jersey with a big, wide bone structure posing as a glamour figure…and what was great was that it somehow worked." When Warhol learned of her mysterious disappearance in February 1987, he noted in his *Diary*, "Brigid never even told me…I would've cared that *Ingrid* was missing."

Lou Reed

While attending Syracuse University to study English in the early 1960s, Reed had a radio show that featured much of the music that influenced him, including doo wop. He met guitarist Sterling Morrison there; and later in New York working as a songwriter, he met Welsh violist John Cale. The trio eventually added Maureen Tucker as drummer and first performed as the Velvet Underground on December 11, 1965. Although Lou Reed made eleven *Screen Tests* for Warhol, he appears in very few other Warhol films, except those in

which he is featured as a musician. Since leaving the Velvet Underground in 1970, Reed has continued an ambitious musical career, releasing over twenty-five albums, as well as recently publishing a book of his photographs, *Lou Reed's New York*. Reed and Cale collaborated again in 1989 on *Songs for Drella*, a tribute to their late friend Andy Warhol.

Jane Holzer

Socialite and art collector Baby Jane Holzer, acclaimed in 1964 as "Girl of the Year" by Tom Wolfe in *New York* magazine, played in many Warhol films, including *Soap Opera*, as well as nine *Screen Tests*, several of which were included in the shifting compilation *Thirteen Most Beautiful Women*. She introduced Warhol to Mick Jagger, and remained a friend of the artist until his death in 1987. She is instantly recognizable for her fabulous mane of thick, blonde hair, which she had styled at Kenneth's renowned salon before each performance.