13 most beautiful program notes

Contact

Rick Armstrong

E armstrongr@warhol.org

T 412.237.8339

Program order:

Screen Test: Richard Rheem

"Richard Rheem Theme"

Screen Test: Ann Buchanan

"Ann Buchanan Theme"

Screen Test: Paul America

"Teenage Lightning (and Lonely Highways)"

Screen Test: Edie Sedgwick

"It Don't Rain in Beverly Hills"

Screen Test: Billy Name

"Silver Factory"

Screen Test: Susan Bottomly

"International Velvet Theme"

Screen Test: Dennis Hopper

"Herringbone Tweed"

Screen Test: Mary Woronov

"I Found It Not So"

The Andy Warhol Museum

117 Sandusky Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15212-5890
T 412.237.8300
F 412.237.8340
W www.warhol.org

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Screen Test: Nico
"I'll Keep it With Mine" (Dylan)

Screen Test: Freddy Herko
"Incandescent Innocent"

Screen Test: Ingrid Superstar
"Eyes in My Smoke"

Screen Test: Lou Reed
"Not a Young Man Anymore" (Reed/Cale/Tucker/Morrison)

Screen Test: Jane Holzer
"Knives from Bavaria"

Andy Warhol, *Screen Tests*, 1964-66
16mm film transferred to Beta SP videotape
Black and white, silent, 4 minutes each at 16 frames per second
Collection of The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh
Contribution The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.
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Dean Wareham - vocals, guitars
Britta Phillips - vocals, bass, keyboard
Matt Sumrow - keyboards, guitars
Anthony LaMarca - drums, bass, acoustic guitar, samples

Peter Arsenault, Sound Engineer
Production Design by Clear Story Creative
Rob Long, Lighting Designer
Doug McDermott, Technical Director

13 Most Beautiful…Songs for Andy Warhol's Screen Tests, is a project jointly commissioned by the Andy Warhol Museum and Pittsburgh Cultural Trust for the Pittsburgh International Festival of Firsts 2008.

Dean Wareham was born in New Zealand, and moved to New York City in 1977. He attended high school in New York, also attending shows at CBGB's, the Mudd Club, and Hurrah. In 1985 he graduated from Harvard University with a degree in Social Studies. He founded the Boston trio Galaxie 500 (as singer/guitarist and songwriter), recording three albums between 1988 and 1991. His next band Luna recorded seven studio albums and toured the world between 1992 and 2004, appearing on MTV, VH1 and *Late Night With Conan O'Brien.* He now performs and records with wife Britta Phillips for the Zöe/Rounder label. They have released two full-length albums, *L'Avventura* and *Back Numbers*, and composed the score for *The Squid & the Whale*. Dean's memoir, *Black Postcards*, a personal and cultural chronicle of fifteen years spent in indie rock, was published by Penguin Press in 2008, and will be available as a Penguin paperback in May, 2009.

Britta Phillips grew up in Bucks County, PA. She moved to NYC as a teen to pursue music like her father, Peter Phillips, whose has played with artists as diverse as Herbie Hancock, Maureen Fleming, and Philip Glass. Britta's first job was as the singing voice of cartoon rock star, Jem, of *Jem & The Holograms*. Soon after, she starred alongside Julia Roberts, Liam Neeson and Justine

Bateman in the movie *Satisfaction*. Britta then moved to London with her band, Belltower, where they joined the shoe-gazing scene. Belltower released one full-length album, several EPs, and received accolades from the NME and Melody Maker. After returning to the U.S., Britta toured with Australian singer-songwriter Ben Lee before joining Luna in 2000, and playing on the band's final three albums.

Anthony LaMarca (percussion, bass, guitar) was born in Youngstown, Ohio in 1987. Instantly enamored with music, Anthony was rarely seen without a Walkman and a Genesis tape. By the age of ten, he and his brother Angelo had gained regional recognition as performers. Today they write and record under the name *The Caledonia Mission*. Anthony joined *Dean & Britta* in 2007 after they heard him play at a party for fashion designer and fellow Ohioan Nanette Lepore. Besides these projects, Anthony also appears on Young Lords' *Rodeo Songs* and the forthcoming debut for French singer/songwriter Claire Denamur. Anthony studies jazz performance at The New School. He would like to thank his family.

Matt Sumrow (guitars, keyboards) was born in Atlanta, Georgia and raised in Roswell, Georgia, Charlotte, North Carolina and Mahwah, New Jersey. Born to a church-going, southern family, he was introduced early on to gospel music, started playing piano at age 6 and trumpet soon after that. Around 11 years old he started playing guitar and picked up on bass when it was needed. He started his first band as a freshman in high school at age 14, playing in clubs in and around Charlotte. He attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he studied film and media, and medieval religion, along with the occasional music class. Matt immersed himself in the music scene in Chapel Hill, NC, playing and touring the country in bands such as the Comas, the Mayflies USA, Cub Country, Jennyanykind, and Roman Candle. Now located in Brooklyn, NY

he continues to pursue music, playing keyboard and guitar with Dean & Britta, also recording and performing with numerous bands including GIRLS and the Still Out.

Re-mix, Re-envision: Commissioning Songs for Andy Warhol's *Screen Tests*

The central aspect of The Andy Warhol Museum's mission is to inspire audiences by using our collection to create understanding and appreciation of the art and life of Andy Warhol. One of the ways in which we try to achieve this is by re-contextualizing Warhol's work in ways that resonate in contemporary culture. To illuminate the unwavering relevancy of an artist who always had an eye on the high/low crossroads and who created work that could be experienced equally well in a gallery, a cinema or a rock show, it seemed appropriate to use his films as a catalyst for a new performance commission.

Among Warhol's films, the *Screen Tests* seem to be intentioned for multiple presentation contexts. Not only were they shown at his studio, the Factory, and as short subjects in avant-garde screenings, but these silent, four-minute, film portraits were a primary visual component of Warhol's multi-media happenings *Andy Warhol Uptight* (1966) and the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable* (1967). These shows, featuring live performances by the Velvet Underground and Nico, provide a precedent and historic basis for this film/performance initiative.

The first endeavor in commissioning a musician to compose, arrange, and perform songs for the films was to somehow make a selection from among the almost 300 *Screen Tests* that have been preserved. Warhol's conceptual sub-series *Thirteen Most Beautiful Women* and *Thirteen Most Beautiful Boys* presented a rather convenient and intriguing model for the structure of the

project. Thirteen four-minute *Screen Test*s run about an hour, a fitting length for a live music set and thirteen is also an appropriate number of songs for a full-length record. Also, given that the four-minute length is typical of a standard pop song, we imagined that the music could involve a narrative songwriting approach with lyrics whose imagery could either tangentially evoke the "essence" of the filmed subject, particularly for the lesser known subjects, or provide a more direct homage.

Dean Wareham and Britta Phillips are uniquely appropriate for this project on many levels, including the overall "dream pop" sensibility of their former indie-pop band, Luna, known for its combination of both churning and languid rhythms, entrancingly melodic guitar hooks, and clever and wistful lyrics, as well as the often referenced Velvet Underground influence in their music. In addition, Wareham and Phillips have a keen interest in 1960s Italian and French New Wave cinema and have created scores for contemporary films, such as Noah Baumbach's *The Squid & the Whale* and *Clean* by Olivier Assayas. Their songs provide not only a new context for experiencing Warhol's films, but also a juxtaposition that may reveal new or previously hidden qualities in these engaging film portraits.

It has been an absolute pleasure developing this project with Dean & Britta and to see a performance tour come to fruition. And furthermore, the production of the DVD, which allows the project, the films, and the songs to reach a much larger audience, is thoroughly exciting and gratifying.

Ben Harrison
Associate Curator for Performance
The Andy Warhol Museum

Geralyn Huxley

the warhol: 13 most beautiful program notes

Curator of Film & Video

The Andy Warhol Museum