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**The Andy Warhol Museum Presents Summer Exhibition Of Three Artists
Rarely Seen In The United States**

(Pittsburgh, PA), April 16, 2001. . . The Andy Warhol Museum presents a new three-part exhibition, *Popular CultureS/Michael Parekowhai/Ravinder Reddy/Yinka Shonibare* June 10 through September 2, 2001. It is often thought that American culture and popular culture are one and the same; the intent of this exhibition is to explore popular and contemporary culture from other parts of the world. Curated by Margery King, Associate Curator for The Warhol, *Popular CultureS* presents three artists whose works reflect their own cultures and the global interweaving of various popular cultures. These artists use materials or icons that are representative of Maori/New Zealand, India, and Nigeria/England, their respective cultures. *Popular CultureS* will introduce work that has never been seen in Pittsburgh, and rarely seen in the United States. The exhibition will include approximately fifteen pieces, including installations and multi-part works.

Michael Parekowhai (pair-ě-kōf-ī), a 33-year-old artist of Maori heritage born in Porirua, New Zealand, has been greatly influence by his culture, both traditional and contemporary. A significant aspect of Parekowhai's work is the exploration of Maori and Western popular culture, especially as experienced by the artist as a boy growing up in New Zealand. Influenced by Western rock of the 1960s, Parekowhai has said, "I was never into cars...I always thought owning a smart guitar would be much cooler than owning a car." He fashioned *Ten Guitars*, ten crafted instruments using traditional Maori materials and designs to represent the 1960s rock music popular among many Maori people. *Ten Guitars* explores Maori culture's adoption

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and transformation of Western popular music, as well as cultural differences and questions of assimilation. *Ten Guitars* will be on display at The Warhol with musicians performing in the gallery each weekend. Also on view will be Parekowhai's installation of fourteen lightboxes, *The Bosom of Abraham*.

Indian sculptor, 45-year-old Ravinder Reddy creates oversized fiberglass pieces, embellished with hotly-colored and metallic paint that combine traditional with contemporary Indian popular culture. The co-existence of the traditional and the contemporary, especially in the area of religion, is a defining aspect of Indian culture. Reddy's sculpture is influenced by the infinitely reproduced religious imagery and the temple sculpture of India and often adorned with attention to vernacular fashion and accessories. "High society was turning the ethnic, and rural women were taking to nylons and lipstick – I was completely fascinated at the kitsch takeover," states the artist. Reddy's works at The Warhol will include a selection of his monumental sculptures.

39-year-old Yinka Shonibare (shōn-ī-bar-ā), a native of London who was born to Nigerian parents and spent his early and teen years in Nigeria, views himself as a citizen of a contemporary global culture and revels in the mixing of, for example, London and Lagos cultures. The brightly colored, boldly designed wax-print fabric he employs to clothe his sculptural figures and uses in installations and two dimensional works is a popular signifier of Africa and African nationalism. However, as Shonibare explains, "the story of the fabric I use is so interesting. It is Indonesian-influenced. It was manufactured in Holland and then in Manchester and shipped to West Africa. Then after independence, it was adopted as African cloth. But as you can see from history, its identity is a construct. The one event which has done most to create new hybrids of people and cultures is Empire... This is part of

history. We cannot change it. It has created a people who are multi-cultural and bilingual.” Shonibare’s work focuses on the exploration of identity, class, race, colonialism, commerce, and the mixed-up layering he sees as characterizing contemporary culture. A range of Shonibare’s work will be shown at The Warhol, including his installation *Victorian Philanthropist’s Parlour*, sculptural and photographic pieces, and his newest work.

Says exhibition curator Margery King, “From the perspective of The Andy Warhol Museum, Warhol himself is often viewed as a global brand and popular culture is most often explored with a focus of Warhol’s version. In this context, it is especially exciting to bring the work of Parekowhai, Reddy, and Shonibare to the Museum, with a focus on each artist’s unique, contemporary point of view. The individual exhibitions of the artists’ works may be viewed in light of their context in the Museum devoted to Andy Warhol.”

The Warhol will also host a series of film, music, and other programs exploring popular cultures from around the globe.

Financial support has been provided by the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency, and The Rockefeller Foundation. Michael Parekowhai’s presentation has been made possible with assistance from Creative New Zealand. Yinka Shonibare’s presentation has been made possible with assistance from the British Council and Joe’s Basement.

The 2001 exhibition program has been supported in part by The Juliet Lea Hillman Simonds Foundation, Inc.

Located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the place of Andy Warhol's birth, The Warhol is one of the most comprehensive single-artist museums in the world. The Andy Warhol Museum is one of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh. Additional information about The Warhol is available at www.warhol.org.

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Phone: 412.237.8300

Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs, Sat, and Sun 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Fri 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Mon closed

Good Fridays - Every Fri, 5 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Admission: Members - free, Adults - \$8,

Sr. Citizens -\$7, Children/Students - \$4,

The Warhol Store/The Warhol Café - free