

# the warhol:

# press release

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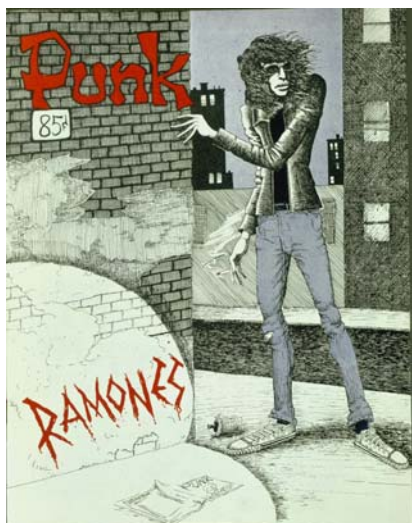
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## THE ANDY WARHOL MUSEUM ANNOUNCES SUMMER EXHIBITION, *THE DOWNTOWN SHOW: THE NEW YORK ART SCENE, 1974-84*

(Pittsburgh, PA) . . . March 6, 2006...In 1949, Andy Warhol left his hometown of Pittsburgh to take a chance at a life as an artist in New York City. He was not alone. For more than 150 years, New York has been an epicenter of creativity and a hotspot to which artists, painters, writers and performers have flocked. One decade, from 1974 to 1984, is the subject of The Andy Warhol Museum's summer exhibition, *The Downtown Show: The New York Art Scene, 1974-84*, on view May 27 through September 3, 2006. The exhibition is organized by the Grey Art Gallery and Fales Library and Special Collections at New York University (where it is currently on view through April 1) and is curated by *Paper* magazine senior editor and popular-culture critic, Carlo McCormick.

*The Downtown Show: The New York Art Scene, 1974-84* is the first substantial retrospective of ten critically important years in New York's Downtown district—a time when a new, postmodern attitude towards artistic production began to surface. Emerging in the aftermath of the Summer of Love and coming to a close with the re-election of Ronald Reagan, the Downtown scene in New York attracted artists, musicians, performers, filmmakers, writers and others who could afford the then-low rents of Lower East Side tenements and SoHo lofts. In a rapidly evolving landscape, these artists ferociously churned out work that was populist and subversive, utopian and raw, antic and angry. They adopted an anarchic approach that violated the gap between high art and mass culture, sought to remove avant-garde art from its isolation within elite circles, emphasized speed of execution over technical proficiency, and addressed social and political concerns head-on.

*The Downtown Show* features approximately 175 artists and includes more than 375 paintings, sculpture, drawings, videos and photographs — as well as more than 70 items from Fales Library, New York University's rare book and manuscript collection. Represented artists include: Vito Acconci, Karen Finley, Cindy Sherman, David Wojnarowicz, Kiki Smith, Jenny Holzer, Nan Goldin, Patti Smith, Nam June Paik, Keith Haring, Richard Hell, Carolee Schneemann, Robert Mapplethorpe, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and many others. Music selections will feature punk, but also reference minimalism and techno.



Punk magazine, no. 3, April 1976  
Fales Library and Special Collections, NYU



Tseng Kwong Chi, *Puck Ball (The Gang's All Here)*, 1983. © Muna Tseng Dance Projects, Inc. New York. All Rights Reserved.

## The Andy Warhol Museum

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“The Warhol is the perfect venue for this remarkable exhibition because the show is permeated by Andy Warhol’s spirit and influence,” says John Smith, assistant director for collections and research at The Andy Warhol Museum. “Although by 1974, Warhol was a decidedly “Uptown” artist — meaning he was financially successful and embraced by the art world establishment — he never lost his “Downtown” credibility.”

The many barriers between high and low culture that Warhol broke in the 1960s, were further exploited by the artists of the next generation, says Smith. “Furthermore, Warhol’s example of how an artist could successfully move between multiple mediums and forms of expression became particularly relevant for the artists featured in this exhibition who easily moved between music, theater, visual art, performance, poetry and filmmaking.”

### **Exhibition**

It was in the mid-1970s that a distinctive “Downtown attitude” toward both art and life could be identified. Rather than completely overthrowing established forms, Downtown artists sought to undermine from within the familiar structures of artistic genres and the complacent culture that had grown up around them. Influenced by the Beats and New York School artists as well as hippies, Marxists, and anarchists, Downtown artists pushed the limits of traditional artistic categories — visual artists were also writers; writers were developing performance pieces; performers were incorporating video into their work; and everyone was in a band.

In keeping with the experimental spirit of these multiple practices, the exhibition is organized into eight themes. Presented ‘salon style’ this framing invokes the invigorating dissonance of the Downtown scene. The eight sections comprise: 1.) **Interventions** — a preface and introduction that posits a connection between the proliferation of not-for-profit exhibition venues and artworks engaging Downtown urban settings and architecture; 2.) **Broken Stories** — a fresh look at the innovative narrative techniques developed during the decade by writers, filmmakers and visual artists; 3.) **De-Signs** — an investigation of the artistic use of advertising’s shorthand signs and strategies; 4.) **Salon de Refuse** — a section that brings together works that harnessed the surrounding detritus to create a “trash culture” that challenged traditional hierarchical distinctions; 5.) **Body Politics** — a presentation of art concerned with sexuality and identity politics; 6.) **Sublime Time** — an exploration of the period’s search for the sublime in the wake of minimalism’s reductive and formal concept of beauty; 7.) **The Portrait Gallery** — featuring photographic, sculptural and painted images of key Downtown figures; and in conclusion, 8.) **The Mock Shop** — a recreation of the stores—featuring lost-cost artists’ multiples and other works—that critiqued consumer culture in many Downtown shows and collaborations.

Interspersed throughout is a rich array of Fales Library's archival material—artists' journals as well as exhibition announcements, posters and other ephemera—which together represent not only a significant body of the period's material cultural, but also vivid reminders of its personal histories.

### **Publication**

A separate but related volume, *The Downtown Book: The New York Art Scene, 1974-1984*, (Princeton University Press, Paperback, 208 pages, \$29.95) will be available in The Warhol Store during the run of the exhibition. The book brings together essays by leading scholars, writers and members of the Downtown scene and discusses the visual arts, music, film and video, performance art and literature of the time.

### **Related Programs**

In connection with the exhibition, The Warhol will present the following public programs:

Saturday, May 27, 8 p.m.

#### **An evening with Richard Hell**

Tickets \$15

New York City punk icon Richard Hell will read from his writings, share film clips and answer audience questions related to the Downtown scene.

Sunday, May 28, 12 p.m.

#### **Gallery talk by Carlo McCormick, *Downtown Show* co-curator**

Included with regular Museum admission

Good Fridays, June 2, 8 p.m.

#### **Video: *The Lower East Side Atlantis –The Loss of Utopia* presented in person by creator Clayton Patterson**

Tickets \$7; includes Museum admission

Patterson presents a 90-minute program culled from his personal video archive of footage from New York's Lower East Side between 1986 and 2000.

Good Fridays, July 7, 7 p.m.

#### **An evening of Downtown inspired fashion, music & art from Pittsburgh**

Half-price Museum admission (\$5 adults, \$3.50 seniors, \$3 students and children)

Featuring a fashion show by local designers Nami Ogawa and Brian Holderman, plus music by rock band, Modey Lemon and the Pandemic DJ collective.

Good Fridays, July 14, 8 p.m.

#### ***Pretty Songs and Ugly Stories: An evening of music and spoken word with Ann Magnuson***

Tickets \$15; includes Museum admission

A Downtown New York legend, Magnuson sings songs filled with hilarious and biting satire.

Good Fridays, July 21, 8 p.m.

**Films:** *Final Reward* (1978, directed by Racid Kerdouche) and *Where Evil Dwells* (1986, directed by Tommy Turner and David Wojnarowicz)

Tickets \$7; includes Museum admission

Two rare films from the 1970s & 1980s, starring notorious underground/Downtown personalities.

Good Fridays, August 25, 8 p.m.

**Film:** *Views of New York: 1975-1984*

Tickets \$7; includes Museum admission

A program of seven short films made in New York in the 1970s & 1980s. Including: *Blood, Default Averted, Martens Bar, Sodom and Gomorrah New York 10036, Chet's Garage, The West Village Meat Market, and The View from Avenue A.*

Following The Warhol, *The Downtown Show* will be on view at the Austin Museum of Art, Austin, Texas from November 11, 2006 through January 28, 2007.

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This exhibition has been made possible, in part, with funds provided by the Andy Warhol Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Abby Weed Grey Trust.

The Andy Warhol Museum receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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](http://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

**Admission:** Members - free

Good Fridays - 5-10 p.m., Half-price Museum admission

Adults - \$10, Sr. Citizens - \$7, Children/Students - \$6

The Warhol Store/The Warhol Café – free