The Andy Warhol Museum

Wall Text and Expanded Labels

Compiled October 2018

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# Introduction

Since the museum’s inauguration in 1994, there has been a steadily increasing level of recognition of Warhol’s singular contribution to twentieth-century art and his extraordinary influence on contemporary art internationally. The Andy Warhol Museum has been at the forefront of research on the artist’s work and has paved the way for new scholarship and understanding of his complex, multivalent practice.

The collection galleries, which begin here on the 7th floor and continue throughout the remaining floors, are chronologically organized and feature masterpieces from the collection alongside rarely seen artworks and archival material that provide new perspectives on the artist’s life and work.

The museum’s collection comprises almost 8,000 paintings, sculptures and works on paper, in addition to vast archives and extensive holdings of film and video. Regarded as the most comprehensive single artist museum in the world, The Warhol is uniquely placed to reveal the multiple narratives that contribute to the overall trajectory of Warhol’s career.

The redesign and reinstallation of the museum’s collection galleries have been made possible through the generous support of:

The Fine Foundation

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# Gallery 701

## The Warhola Family

Andy Warhol was born Andrew Warhola in Pittsburgh on August 6, 1928. He was the youngest of three sons born to Carpatho-Rusyn parents, Andrej and Julia Warhola. Like masses of immigrants before them, the Warholas left their homeland in Eastern Europe in search of a better life. As devout Byzantine Catholics, the family attended church regularly and observed many customs of their heritage. Julia made traditional handicrafts such as “pysanky,” or decorated Easter eggs, while also supervising the home. Andrej worked long hours in many manual jobs such as a building-mover.

Warhol suffered bouts of chorea, a nervous disorder more commonly known as “St. Vitus’ Dance,” which occasionally kept him home from school. While at home, Warhol liked to read comics and Hollywood magazines and to play with paper cut-outs. Enraptured by the movies, he often went to local cinemas and watched short cartoons at home.

Andrej Warhola died in 1942, the same year that Andy entered Schenley High School. In order to support the family, Julia worked as a house cleaner, while her oldest sons Paul and John operated a fruit-and-vegetable truck and worked odd jobs. As a high school freshman, Warhol began to paint portraits of his family and friends as well as local landmarks. Andrej had always intended that Andy attend college, and before he died he set aside funds for his youngest son’s education.

### Archival family photographs

These photographs from the Archives Collection show the Warhola family over a span of three decades including photographs of Warhol’s mother, Julia (Zavacky) Warhola, starting with her passport photo, 1920. A Zavacky family photo taken in their hometown of Mikova, ca. 1915, is followed by several of the Warhola family after they immigrated to the United States. Young Andy is seen in these photos with his mother, brothers, aunts, uncles and cousins in Pittsburgh in the 1930s. Andy’s father, Andrej Warhola, passed away in 1942, when Andy was entering high school at age 14. The photographs continue chronologically with Andy’s class at Schenley High School, ca. 1944.

## Art School

Warhol was encouraged to develop his creative talents from early childhood. Beyond his family, his strongest advocate was Joseph C. Fitzpatrick, the renowned instructor of Saturday art classes at Carnegie Museum of Art, which Warhol attended for four years beginning in the fourth grade.

With the money the family saved for his education, Warhol enrolled in the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University). He attended college from 1945 to 1949, studying under the artists Balcomb Greene, Robert Lepper and Samuel Rosenberg. Frequently the center of controversy, Warhol struggled with his early coursework and was required to take summer classes. Despite the turbulence he caused, a slim majority of faculty and students recognized his innovative style and fresh ideas.

Warhol was an active participant in college life. He was a member of Carnegie Tech’s honorary Beaux Arts Society and the Modern Dance Club, and in 1948 he became art editor for the student magazine *Cano.* He also worked in the display department at Horne’s department store to earn money. His abilities to increase his income while pursuing creative interests and to cultivate a dynamic social circle are skills Warhol later put to good use in building his career.

Women and Produce Truck, 1946, 1998.1.1613
After nearly failing his freshman year, professors advised him to polish his drawing skills before continuing his studies. This quick sketch of customers purchasing fruit and vegetables from his brother Paul’s produce truck is from the series Warhol made over that summer in 1946. His skills improved considerably, and after returning to college in the fall he received a cash “prize for progress.” His friends from that time note that winning this prize marked a turning point in his confidence and paved the way for bold experiments to come.

## New York City

After graduating from Carnegie Tech with a bachelor’s degree in pictorial design, Warhol made the life-changing decision to move to New York City. Accompanied by his classmates Philip Pearlstein and Leila Davies Singeles, he immediately set about the process of looking for work as a commercial artist. Warhol was hired that summer by Tina Fredericks, the editor of *Glamour* magazine, to illustrate an article titled “What is Success?”

Quickly building an impressive roster of clients, Warhol soon became one of the most successful commercial illustrators in the city. He won numerous industry awards, including recognition from his peers at the Art Directors Club, the American Institute of Graphic Arts, and the Society of Illustrators. By the mid-1950s Warhol was able to employ an assistant, and by the end of the decade he was earning approximately $70,000, an incredible salary for that time.

Edward Wallowitch

Throughout his first decade in New York City, Warhol shared both a working and personal relationship with Edward Wallowitch, a talented photographer. Wallowitch was the youngest photographer to be acquired by the Museum of Modern Art at the age of seventeen. Warhol and Wallowitch were close friends and lovers. In the early part of his career, Warhol used Wallowitch’s photographs as source material for drawings and paintings.

# Julia Warhola

Andy Warhol’s mother, Julia, played an active role in her son’s artistic life. She encouraged Andy to draw and color as a child, and even bought him a camera and film projector. In 1952, she moved to New York to take care of Warhol, who quickly incorporated her whimsical penmanship into his commercial illustrations. They proved to be a perfect match. Although they typically collaborated, Julia created notable work of her own. Regarded as a self-taught artist, Julia enthusiastically sketched images of her favorite subjects: cats and angels. For example, in 1957, Warhol published a book of her cat drawings titled *Holy Cats by Andy Warhol’s Mother*. That same year, she created an award-winning record album cover. Julia lived with Andy in New York until shortly before her death in 1972.

## Blotted Line Technique

In the 1950s Warhol refined a process that he had discovered in college, creating a signature style for his illustrations with a technique known as “blotted line.” This working method combined drawing with basic printmaking and allowed Warhol to repeat an image and to create multiple illustrations along a similar theme. He could also make color or compositional changes quickly in response to client requests.

Warhol’s blotted line process had several complex steps. First, he drew or traced a line drawing onto a piece of non-absorbent paper, such as tracing paper. Next, he hinged the tracing paper to a second sheet of absorbent paper by taping the edges together on one side. Opening the papers like a book and using a nib pen, Warhol inked over a small section of the lines on the tracing paper. He then transferred the wet ink onto the absorbent sheet by closing the pages and lightly pressing or “blotting.” He repeated this inking and blotting until the whole drawing was transferred.

Completing a large blotted line drawing took time and multiple pressings. The method resulted in dotted, broken, and delicate lines. Warhol colored his blotted line drawings with water soluble dyes and applied gold leaf. He also used hand-carved rubber stamps to create patterns, often combining both techniques in a drawing.

# Boy Book

During the 1950s Warhol held several exhibitions of his drawings at venues such as the Hugo Gallery, the Loft Gallery, and Serendipity Café. While these shows revealed shared stylistic tendencies with his commercial work of the same period, they often portrayed subjects of a more personal and idiosyncratic nature. The artist made thousands of sketchbook drawings whose subjects were beautifully rendered portraits of young men and erotic drawings of male nudes.

In February 1956, Warhol presented a solo exhibition at the Bodley Gallery titled, ‘Studies for a Boy Book’. While the book itself never eventuated, the exhibition comprised sensual drawings of young men many of which had been sketched from life. While a checklist of the exhibition has not been uncovered, the drawings exhibited here give a sense of the types of works that are likely to have been on display.

## Commercial Work

Warhol’s professional success as a commercial illustrator was largely due to his ability to create art very quickly and his willingness to respond to the revisions clients demanded. One of the most well-known 1950s ad campaigns he helped create was for I. Miller Shoes. The idea of decorative beauty was exaggerated in almost all of these illustrations, and at times the image of the shoe became very abstract. The I. Miller campaign was so successful in creating an aura of elegance that in some of the ads the shoes were not shown at all; everyone knew what was being sold. Other clients included book publishers, record companies, and fashion magazines.

Among the art directors with whom he worked, Warhol was known for his timid yet appealing personality. He was a quick study—given an assignment, he would turn in a brown paper bag full of drawings on the subject the very next day. His simple yet sophisticated drawing style, in contrast to the era’s burgeoning use of photographic advertising, appealed to art directors, as well as to post-war Americans, who were becoming savvy consumers.

# Love is a Pink Cake, 1953

Through the 1950s, Andy Warhol made a number of self-published books and portfolios that he distributed as gifts to clients and associates. The imaginative narratives centered around fanciful drawings of subjects such as fairies, cats, and food. In 1953, Warhol collaborated with friend and romantic interest Ralph Thomas Ward (Corkie) on several book projects, including *A is An Alphabet*, *The House That Went to Town,* and *Love is a Pink Cake*. This selection of drawings is from *Love is a Pink Cake.* They feature doomed couples from history and literature, including Romeo and Juliet; Anthony and Cleopatra; and Oscar Wilde and his young lover. Warhol made the illustrations and the poetic verses were written by Ward, who describes these infamous relationships in a feisty manner. The cherub depicted at the start of the portfolio implies love is tender and sweet, but the last page reinforces the complexities of love with an impish gentleman dangling a dark heart from a string.

# So, 1959

Andy Warhol experimented with visual repetition throughout his career. In the 1950s, Warhol used handmade rubber stamps to create repeated patterns and symbols in his commercial work and artist’s books. These artworks are from an unpublished children’s book Warhol created around the word “*So*”. Most of the whimsical, stamped images are inspired by nature—birds, stars, fruit, and flowers. The stamping adds texture and pattern to his illustrations as well as a playful quality. For example, the work *I love you so* is accentuated by multiple red hearts above a single bird, and *So many people* features numerous arms and heads splashing within stylized waves emphasizing the written phrases.

# Gallery 702

## Hand-painted Pop

By the end of the 1950s, Warhol began to devote more energy to painting. He was drawn to the Pop Art movement, which began in Britain in the mid 1950s. Pop artists were inspired by popular culture, taking images directly from advertising or newspaper sources for their artworks. In 1961 Warhol created his first Pop paintings based on comics and ads.

Warhol made many of these early works by enlarging images from magazines and photographs with an opaque projector and then hand-painting the projections on canvas. He used rubber stamps to print directly onto canvas in such works as *S&H Green Stamps* and used stencils in his early *Campbell’s Soup Can* paintings. Warhol first employed the commercial process of silkscreen printing in the Dollar Bill paintings. The silkscreens were created from hand-drawn reproductions Warhol made of one-dollar and two-dollar bills. His first silkscreened paintings based on a photographic source was *Basebal*l, 1962.

Photographic silkscreen printing replicated the look of commercial advertising, giving Warhol a faithful duplication of his appropriated source images while also allowing him to experiment with over-printing, off-registration, and endless color combinations.

### S&H Green Stamps, 1962, 1998.1.21

S&H Green Stamps were distributed by the Sperry Hutchinson Co. beginning in 1896. These iconic stamps symbolized thrift and saving for many Americans. The stamps were sold to retailers that in turn gave them to customers as bonuses with every purchase. The more people purchased, the more stamps they received. A certain number of stamps could be traded in for merchandise, so retailers enjoyed customer loyalty through this successful program. According to company accounts in the mid-60s, eighty percent of U.S. households collected green stamps. The S&H program declined in the 1970s and 80s, but was reinvigorated by the birth of the Internet and new ownership. The company now offers “green points” as rewards for on-line purchases.

### Do It Yourself (Sailboats), 1962, 2016.4

Warhol created only five *Do It Yourself* paintings. This rare series demonstrates the artist’s experimentations with Pop imagery. Like the iconic *Campbell’s Soup Can* paintings, the *Do It Yourself* works use instantly recognizable imagery as subject. Warhol opened the door for anything to be considered a worthy focus in art. These “paint-by-number” works are directly related to the act of painting by children and hobbyists. Warhol pokes fun at the seriousness of the art world and the dominant painting style of the time, Abstract Expressionism. These painters valued freedom, expressive and intuitive paint-laying, and the originality of the artist’s hand. Warhol proposes that a dime store painting kit, replete with instructions on exactly how to paint, where to paint, and with what colors to paint, is just as legitimate a subject. Perhaps more importantly, he reinvents painting as a figurative endeavor, over that of abstraction.

*Do It Yourself (Sailboats) is a new museum acquisition made possible in collaboration with Gagosian Gallery*

### Typewriter [2], 1961, 1998.1.8

In 1961 and 1962, Warhol worked on a series of paintings that departed from the contemporary subject matter that occupied him during this time period. These works were based on vintage newspaper advertisements and product catalogues that Warhol either owned or borrowed. Warhol achieved the monumental scale of the works by placing the source image on an opaque projector and tracing the subject directly onto his canvas.

### Telephone [4], 1962, 1998.1.10

Andy Warhol loved to talk on the phone. This painting is one of four versions of the subject executed between 1961 and 1962, all of which were derived from an illustration from the New York Library’s Picture Collection. It is notable that Warhol chose to depict an antique phone rather than a square rotary dial model of the kind that was in everyday use during the 1960s. This early work reveals Warhol’s ability to identify images and products that had the potential to become icons of consumer culture and, in doing so, to depict popular ideas in his art rather than to simply depict objects.

# Dance Diagram, 1962, 1998.1.11

Warhol completed the *Dance Diagram* paintings in early 1962. There are seven paintings based on sources from two

instructional manuals published by the Dance Guild in 1956: *Lindy Made Easy (with Charleston)* and *Fox Trot Made Easy.* All of the diagram paintings were exhibited at the Stable Gallery in New York in 1962. In that show, Warhol installed the works on the floor, simulating the function of the original instructional booklets. Several critics have noted the connection between Warhol’s *Dance Diagram* paintings and the idea of “participatory aesthetics,” whereby the viewer is no longer expected to passively contemplate a work of art, but is asked to actively engage with it.

### Big Torn Campbell’s Soup Can (Pepper Pot),

### 1962, 1998.1.31

Warhol’s use of the popular everyday product Campbell’s Soup launched his career as a Pop artist. The early 1960s saw the beginning of the pervasive influence of television, instant communications, and instant celebrity. Warhol understood the influential power of advertising and packaging in convincing people to buy all kinds of things. The product’s familiar red-and-white label was immediately recognizable to Americans, and eating Campbell’s Soup was a widely shared experience. Warhol himself said, “Pop art is about liking things,” and claimed that he ate Campbell’s Soup every day for 20 years. This quintessential American product represented modern ideals: it was inexpensive, easily prepared, and available in any food market. Warhol turned to this subject repeatedly throughout his career.

# Hand-painted Pop Vitrines

A selection of mass produced and hand-carved rubber stamps that Warhol used to create repeated images. He employed this technique beginning in 1955 through the early 1960s.

Source material for *Do It Yourself (Sailboats)* painting in this gallery.

Items related to Warhol’s *Do-It-Yourself* paintings.

Stencils used to make Warhol’s first serial compositions—repetition of imagery within single works. Warhol assembled these early paintings and one sculpture through the layering of a number of hand-cut stencils. Warhol traced and cut his stencils directly from an Edward Wallowitch photograph, a single can of beef-noodle soup.

Ribbed Capri pants embroidered by Pop artist Claes Oldenburg’s then-wife Patty, to celebrate the opening of Warhol’s first Stable Gallery exhibition.

Source material for Warhol’s *Dance Diagrams* of 1962.

## Tactile Art Reproductions

These fully tangible reproductions provide a sensory experience for our blind and visually impaired guests to gain a greater understanding of Andy Warhol’s key artworks.  The art diagrams are crafted through 2D imaging software and 3D machining technology providing accurate information about basic composition and color as well as stylistic properties such as texture and brushwork.  We welcome all visitors, visually impaired and sighted, to learn about Warhol’s artwork through the sense of touch.

# Gallery 603

## Silkscreen Printing

In 1962 Andy Warhol began using photographic silkscreen printing. This commercial process allowed him to easily reproduce the images he appropriated from popular culture.

First, Warhol would crop the original source image and then send it to a commercial printer to be enlarged and transferred onto a silkscreen. The printer would make a film or transparency of the cropped image and photographically “burn” it onto a silkscreen using light-sensitive emulsion.

This process involved placing the film onto the silkscreen and exposing it to a bright light. The emulsion hardened into the mesh of screen in the areas exposed to light. Wherever the light was blocked by the black areas of the film, the emulsion didn’t harden and was washed away with water, thus creating a stencil which allowed ink to pass through the open areas of the screen.

Warhol would often “underpaint” his canvases before printing. Sometimes he painted the backgrounds a solid color. At other times, he traced specific areas of the image, such as the subject’s lips or hairline, onto the canvas and then filled the areas with vibrant colors. After the underlayer dried, Warhol would print the screen by dragging the rubber blade of a squeegee across the screen, pushing ink through the tiny holes in the mesh. These tiny ink dots created a printed image.

Warhol worked with art assistants and professional printers to produce thousands of silkscreen paintings and print portfolios throughout his lifetime.

### Elvis 11 Times, 1963, 1998.1.58

Warhol created his paintings of Elvis Presley using a publicity still for the 1960 film *Flaming Star.* By the early 1960s, Elvis had abandoned live music performances for a busy movie career, eventually starring in 33 feature films. The painting’s serial, overlapping, and blurred image printed on silver paint suggests the repetition and movement of film frames as well as Hollywood’s silver screen.

The monumental canvas was part of a series of *Elvis* and *Liz* paintings first exhibited at the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles in September 1963. Irving Blum, the gallery director at the time, remembers his astonishment when Warhol sent a roll of uncut canvas to the gallery with the simple instruction: “The only thing I really want is that they should be hung edge to edge, densely—around the gallery. So long as you can manage that, do the best you can.” It became Blum’s job to cut the roll into formatted paintings and mount them on stretchers of various sizes. *Elvis 11 Times* is considerably larger than the other *Elvis* paintings because it remained on a roll in Warhol’s studio and was not shown in Los Angeles.

### Flowers, 1964, 1998.1.24

After painting film stars and the *Death and Disaster* series, Warhol began experimenting with one of modernist painting’s most controversial subjects: decoration. The *Flowers* paintings were exhibited at Warhol’s first show at the renowned Leo Castelli Gallery in New York City in 1964. Created in different sizes— from miniature to monumental—the *Flowers* were grouped together in tight grids. In 1965 Warhol created a subsequent painting series using the same source image for a show at the Galerie Ileana Sonnabend in Paris. This time, more than 100 paintings filled the gallery, some hung almost edge to edge, clearly mimicking the decorative effect of wallpaper.

The source photograph for *Flowers* was taken by Patricia Caulfield and appeared in the June 38 1964 issue of *Modern Photography* magazine. Caulfield, after seeing a poster for Warhol’s paintings, sued to maintain ownership of the image—the first and only copyright lawsuit Warhol faced in his career. The suit was settled out of court, but it raised issues of authorship and copyright that remain highly debated in contemporary art.

# White Burning Car III, 1963, 2002.4.9

*White Burning Car* depicts a gruesome accident taken by photographer John Whitehead. Like many of the works in Warhol’s Death and Disaster series this painting uses a documentary photograph without full disclosure of context. There is no information about the cause of the accident or the conclusion, only repeated images with more and less clarity in succession. The representation of a public tragedy reveals no personal details, only an enlarged and stilled split second of time. The work compels the viewer to search for clues as a voyeur. This image was originally published in the June 3, 1963 issue of *Newsweek*, and was accompanied by the following caption:

*“End of the Chase: Pursued by a state trooper investigating a hit-and–run accident, commercial fisherman Richard J. Hubbard, 24, sped down a Seattle street at more than 60 mph, overturned, and hit a utility pole. The impact hurled him from the car, impaling him on a climbing spike. He died 35 minutes later in a hospital.”*

# Gallery 601 – Film Gallery

## Early Film

*“I never liked the idea of picking out certain scenes and pieces of time and putting them together, because…it’s just not like life….What I liked was chunks of time all together, every real moment…I only wanted to find great people and let them be themselves…and I’d film them for a certain length of time and that would be the movie.”*

Andy Warhol, 1980

As a child in Pittsburgh, Warhol immersed himself in Hollywood movies, going to neighborhood cinemas with his older brothers and keeping a scrapbook of movie star photos. After Warhol moved to New York, his success as a commercial artist provided him the means to start making films. Beginning with *Sleep* in 1963, he made a number of groundbreaking silent films including the eight-hour-long *Empire*.

Warhol produced a wide range of films between 1963 and 1968 including absurd two-reelers scripted by playwright Ronald Tavel, hundreds of *Screen Test* portrait films, vérité dramas capturing his Superstars engaged in everyday activities, and “sexploitation” features. In 1966, he made his most commercially successful film, the three-hour-long, double-screen *The Chelsea Girls*.

### Silver Trunk featured in Warhol’s 1965 film *Vinyl*, 1964

Painted by Billy Name, original maker unknown Metallic paint on canvas on wood with metal and leather details, ca. 1890

This silver-painted trunk was functional décor at Warhol’s Factory. While directing the film *Vinyl*, Warhol requested Edie Sedgwick perform while sitting on the trunk. It was the first of about a dozen Warhol films in which she appeared, almost all of them shot in 1965.

After Warhol’s death in 1987, the trunk was rediscovered in his vast belongings. Inside were Billy Name’s photographs and negatives, as well as the script for Valerie Solanas’s play *Up Your* *Ass*, which she gave to Warhol years earlier. This misplaced script was, in part, the reason for her attempt on Warhol’s life on June 3, 1968. Solanas asked repeatedly for the script to be returned, but was told that he couldn’t locate it. Sometime later, she arrived at the Factory with a .32 handgun, shot Warhol, and fled the scene, turning herself in to police within a few hours. Warhol narrowly survived the incident but was changed forever by the shooting.

### Sleep, 1963

16mm film, black and white, silent, 5 hours and 21 minutes at 16 frames per second

In Warhol’s first film, *Sleep*, he captured poet John Giorno while asleep over the course of several nights during a hot New York summer. Giorno remarked, “Andy would shoot for about three hours, until 5 a.m. when the sun rose, all by himself.… Andy would look at [the rolls] on the hand-cranked movie viewer, and say ‘Oh, they’re so beautiful.’” Warhol took the footage and crafted a five-hour film, looping and repeating the different takes and camera angles to assemble a complex portrait of his sleeping lover. Warhol later declared, “I made my earliest films using, for several hours, just one actor on the screen doing the same thing…. I did this because people usually just go to the movies to see only the star, to eat him up, so here at last is a chance to look only at the star for as long as you like, no matter what he does and to eat him up all you want to.”

### Henry Geldzahler, 1964

16mm film, black and white, silent, 99 minutes at 16 frames per second

In July 1964, the day after he shot *Empire*, Warhol still had rental time left on the 16mm camera as well as extra film. He invited his friend Henry Geldzahler, who was curator of contemporary art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, to be the subject of an extended screen portrait. Warhol advised Geldzahler, “Don’t do anything. Just sit on the couch and smoke your cigar.” He then turned on the camera and walked away, returning only occasionally. The camera’s unrelenting stare provoked Geldzahler to go through what he called his “entire gesture vocabulary.” Using the same minimal techniques which he had used to record the Empire State Building—fixed focus, non-moving camera—Warhol created one of his finest and most intimate portraits.

### Empire, 1964

16mm film, black and white, silent, 8 hours 5 minutes at 16 frames per second

Just over fifty years ago, Andy Warhol created *Empire*, a portrait of New York City’s most famous landmark. On July 25-26, 1964, with his colleagues John Palmer and Jonas Mekas, he aimed a camera out a window of the Rockefeller Foundation Offices on the 41st floor of the Time-Life Building. They recorded the Empire State Building for six hours, from the twilight of 8:00 p.m. through the darkness until 2:30 a.m. Ignoring Hollywood film conventions, Warhol made a film that contained only one image and extended rather than condensed real time. Not only did he forego editing by using all of the footage that was shot, but, when the new work was premiered the following March, Warhol projected the film in slow motion. The final running time was slightly over eight hours, creating a truly epic film portrait. During filming he exclaimed, “The Empire State Building is a star!”

### Edie Sedgwick’s barstool prop from *Kitchen*, 1965

Silver paint on wooden barstool

This barstool is from Andy Warhol’s original Silver Factory at 231 East 47th Street and was used in the film *Kitchen* starring Edie Sedgwick. In 1964, Warhol asked his friend and collaborator Billy Linich to decorate his large new loft after seeing Linich’s silvered apartment. (Billy Linich is better known as Billy Name, an alias that he assumed early in 1966.) It took Linich several months to complete the loft; ladders were needed to apply paint and foil to the high arched ceiling. Discarded furniture was rescued from the basement, given glamorous new life with a coat of silver paint, and served as both party décor and movie props. The barstool and steamer trunk also displayed in this gallery are some of the few artifacts that remain of the Factory. The 47th Street building was demolished in early 1968.

### Brillo Soap Pads Box, 1964, 1998.1.708–9

Warhol’s box sculptures are widely regarded as one of his most significant contributions to 20th-century Western art. For philosopher Arthur C. Danto, they marked the end of an art-historical epoch and represented a new idea for how art could be produced, displayed, and perceived.

Invoking the factory assembly line, Warhol began making the *Brillo*, *Heinz,* and other box sculptures in 1963. The finished artworks very closely resembled their cardboard models—a method of art-making that teetered on the Duchampian concept of the readymade. Unlike Marcel Duchamp, who employed actual objects like a urinal and a snow shovel as artworks, Warhol made, painted and silkscreened his boxes by hand in a machine-like process. The boxes replicate the format of a single packing carton, which Warhol produced in large quantities and in a series. The *Brillo Boxes* were first exhibited in 1964 in a show at the Stable Gallery, New York where they were tightly packed and piled high, recalling a grocery warehouse.

### Jackie, 1964

Deeply affected by media reports surrounding President Kennedy’s assassination in 1963, Warhol began a large portrait series of Jacqueline Kennedy. Based on images from magazines and newspapers, these portraits were shown individually and in groupings. By isolating and repeating Jackie’s image, Warhol suggests both the solitary experience of the widow and the collective mourning of the United States. Commentators have noted that television became a unifying force during this period as people compulsively watched the tragic events. Warhol’s multiple images offer the viewer an obsessive re-enactment of this central incident in US history.

### Silver Liz [Studio Type], 1963

Warhol chose the source image for this painting of Elizabeth Taylor from a publicity photograph promoting her 1960 film, *BUtterfield 8*, for which she won the Best Actress Academy Award. Taylor was at the height of her stardom when he created this portrait. Warhol remembered: “I started those [pictures of Elizabeth Taylor] a long time ago, when she was so sick and everyone said she was going to die. Now I’m doing them all over, putting bright colors on her lips and eyes.” Although Warhol is best known for his portraits of Marilyn Monroe, he utilized Taylor’s image in his work more than any other celebrity.

# Superstars

“I only wanted to find great people and let them be themselves and talk about what they usually talked about … and that would be the movie.” — Andy Warhol

Warhol’s initial fame as an artist was due in large part to his portraits of iconic movie stars but when he began making his own films in 1963, he gathered his own company of regular players. These performers were not professional actors but charismatic personalities who had randomly gravitated to the artist’s circle. Warhol dubbed them “Superstars” as a nod to the Hollywood star system. Unlike the action-packed plots of traditional cinema, the adventures of Warhol’s Superstars were the activities of daily life: chatting with friends, lounging in bed, cutting hair, getting dressed, going out. The allure of this hip, alternative world contributed to Warhol’s growing fame.

# Screen Tests

In January 1964, Warhol moved to a new studio and had it decorated completely in silver, using a combination of paint, aluminum foil, and mirrors. Dubbed the Factory, the vast industrial loft afforded multiple uses: an art studio, a film set and theater, the Velvet Underground’s practice space, and a scene for countless parties. Warhol shot hundreds of films here, including almost 500 short portrait films called *Screen Tests*. The Factory was a place where art and life merged, a hot spot for a colorful crowd of artists and Superstars to congregate.

Andy Warhol SuperstarsWhile hundreds of individuals were featured in Warhol’s films, this compilation features his brightest lights including Edie Sedgwick, Viva, Ondine, and others.

Film Compilation contains excerpts from the following [featured performers are in brackets]:

*Mario Banana #1*, 1964\* [Mario Montez]

16mm film, color, silent, 4 minutes at 16 fps

*Hedy*, 1966 [Mario Montez]

16mm film, black and white, sound, 66 minutes

*Camp*, 1965\* [Mario Montez]

16mm film, black and white, sound, 66 minutes

 *Poor Little Rich Girl*, 1965 [Edie Sedgwick]

16mm film, black and white, sound, 66 minutes

*Beauty #2*, 1965 [Edie Sedgwick]

16mm film, black and white, sound, 66 minutes

*Outer and Inner Space*, 1965 [Edie Sedgwick]

16mm film, black and white, sound, 66 minutes

*Lupe*, 1965\* [Edie Sedgwick]

16mm film, color, sound, 72 minutes; 36 minutes in double-screen

*Face*, 1965 [Edie Sedgwick]

16mm film, black and white, sound, 66 minutes

*The Loves of Ondine*, 1967-68\* [Viva]

16mm film, color, sound, 85 minutes

*The Nude Restaurant*, 1967 [Viva]

16mm film, color, sound, 100 minutes

*Lonesome Cowboys*, 1968 [Viva]

16mm film, color, sound, 109 minutes

*Tarzan and Jane Regained, Sort Of…*, 1963 [Taylor Mead, Dennis Hopper]

16mm film, black and white and color, sound, 80 minutes

*The Nude Restaurant*, 1967 [Taylor Mead]

16mm film, color, sound, 100 minutes

*Lonesome Cowboys*, 1968 [Joe Dallesandro, Eric Emerson]

16mm film, color, sound, 109 minutes

*The Chelsea Girls*, 1966\* [Ondine]

16mm film, black and white, color, sound, 204 minutes in double screen

*Vinyl*, 1965\* [Gerard Malanga, Edie Sedgwick]

16mm film, black and white, sound, 67 minutes

*The Chelsea Girls*, 1966\* [Mary Woronov, Susan Bottomly]

16mm film, black and white, color, sound, 204 minutes in double screen

*The Chelsea Girls*, 1966\* [Brigid Berlin]

16mm film, black and white, color, sound, 204 minutes in double screen

*Soap Opera (aka The Lester Persky Story)*, 1964\* [Jane Holzer]

16mm film, black and white, silent and sound, 47 minutes. Unfinished.

*San Diego Surf*, (1968/completed 1996) [Ingrid Superstar, Viva, Taylor Mead]

16mm film, color, sound, 90 minutes

*The Chelsea Girls*, 1966\* [Nico]

16mm film, black and white, color, sound, 204 minutes in double screen

\*Full-length versions of these films are available in the Film and Video Gallery on the 4th Floor.

# Andy Warhol Screen Tests

This selection of *Screen Tests* includes many of Warhol’s Superstars as well as other performers who were only featured in a of his few films. Also included are Warhol’s portraits of real professional actors: Kyoko Kishida, who starred in the Japanese drama, *Woman in the Dunes*, classic Hollywood star Zachary Scott, and Dennis Hopper, who Warhol knew from his trips to California.

*Screen Tests*, 1964-66
16mm film, black and white, silent, each approximately 4 minutes at 16 frames per second

*Screen Test: Paul America* [ST4], 1965

*Screen Test: Gerard Malanga* [ST198], 1964

*Screen Test: Susan Bottomly* [ST28], 1966

*Screen Test: Taylor Mead* [ST210], 1964

*Screen Test: Freddy Herko* [ST137], 1964

*Screen Test: Ondine* [ST249], 1966

*Screen Test: Billy Linich* [ST194], 1964

*Screen Test: Marie Menken* [ST215], 1966

*Screen Test: Nico* [ST238], 1966

*Screen Test: Richard Rheem* [ST272], 1966

*Screen Test: Zachary Scott* [ST298], 1964

*Screen Test: Edie Sedgwick* [ST305], 1965

*Screen Test: Dennis Hopper* [ST154], 1964

*Screen Test: Kyoko Kishida* [ST183], 1964

*Screen Test: Ingrid Superstar* [ST333], 1966

*Screen Test: Jack Smith* [ST315], 1964

*Screen Test: Mary Woronov* [ST357], 1966

*Screen Test: Jane Holzer* [ST142], 1964

*Screen Test: Ivy Nicholson* [ST230], 1964

*Screen Test: Ultra Violet* [ST347], 1965

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# Gallery 602 - Silver Factory

## Andy Warhol’s Screen Tests

*“I only wanted to find great people and let them be themselves…and I’d film them for a certain length of time and that would be the movie.”*

Andy Warhol, 1980

In January 1964 Andy Warhol moved his studio to a large loft that his friend Billy Name decorated with silver paint and aluminum foil. Called the “Silver Factory,” it became the center of his social scene and attracted a diverse crowd of artists, friends, and celebrities, many of whom would pose for a short film portrait. Warhol made almost 500 of these *Screen Tests* in the span of two years.

Warhol used a stationary Bolex camera loaded with a 100-foot roll of black-and-white 16mm film. The subjects were instructed to sit still and face forward for about three minutes, the length of time it took for the roll of film to run through the camera. Warhol later projected the silent movies in slow motion, thereby extending their duration and imbuing them with a dreamlike stillness.

The *Screen Tests* were organized into the compilation films *The Thirteen Most Beautiful Boys*, *The Thirteen Most Beautiful Women*, and *Fifty Fantastics and Fifty Personalities* and were shown at the Factory in different versions depending on who was in attendance. They were also used in Warhol’s 1966–1967 multimedia happening the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable*, projected with the live music of the Velvet Underground and Nico.

## Screen Test Machine

Create your own screen test!

In much the same way Andy Warhol made his *Screen Tests,* you can shoot a silent film portrait of yourself to share with your family and friends.

You are the artist and the “Superstar.” Decide how you would like to present yourself by selecting the background and lighting that you
prefer. Position yourself in front of the camera and then follow the
instructions on screen.

The sound of the camera will let you know you are being recorded. It takes three minutes to shoot a screen test. When the sound stops, your portrait is complete. Your film will be transformed digitally to slow
motion, and after approximately five minutes you will receive an e-mail from the museum with instructions for viewing it.

Please do not touch the camera or the lights in the installation.

# Gallery 502

## The Silver Clouds

*“I don’t paint anymore, I gave it up about a year ago and just do movies now. I could do two things at the same time but movies are more
exciting. Painting was just a phase I went through. But I’m doing some floating sculpture now: silver rectangles that I blow up and that float.”*

*—*Andy Warhol, 1966

In April 1966 Warhol opened his light and music extravaganza the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable (EPI)*, a complete sensorial experience of light, music, and film at the Dom, a large dance hall in the East
Village in New York City. Running concurrently with the *EPI* was Warhol’s bold and unconventional exhibition at the prestigious Leo Castelli Gallery that comprised two artworks: the *Silver Clouds* and *Cow Wallpaper.*

Constructed from metalized plastic film and filled with helium, the floating clouds were produced in collaboration with Billy Klüver, an engineer known for his work with artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Yvonne Rainer, and John Cage. Warhol originally asked Klüver to create floating light bulbs; an unusual shape that proved infeasible.

Klüver showed Warhol a sample of the silver material and his reaction to the plastic sparked a new direction, “Let’s make clouds.” They experimented with cumulus shapes, but the puffed rectangle was the most successful and most buoyant. The end result was what Warhol was looking for from the beginning—“paintings that could float.” *Silver Clouds,* like the *EPI* with its flashing lights and overlapping films, was an explosion of objects in space and presented an immersive, bodily experience for the viewer.

### Rainforest, 1968

Merce Cunningham, choreographer
Richard Leacock and D.A. Pennebaker, filmmakers
16mm film, color, sound, 27 minutes

Courtesy of Pennebaker Hegedus Films, Inc.

Merce Cunningham, the celebrated choreographer, known for his collaborations with Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, first saw the *Silver Clouds* during Warhol’s 1966 opening at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York. Cunningham was enraptured by the work and asked Warhol if he could use the floating installation as stage décor for his piece *Rainforest*. The *Clouds* although visually captivating were temperamental—hovering near the lights or lingering too close to the stage floor—and eventually had to be tethered to the ceiling. Sharing the stage with the silver installation, dancers wore minimalist costumes with rips and slashes that subtly revealed their bodies. Cunningham originally asked Warhol to design costumes to coordinate with the *Clouds*. He was, however, disappointed when Warhol proposed that the dancers perform nude. Ultimately, it was Johns who designed the flesh-colored woolen costumes, which were inspired by a pair of Cunningham’s old, ripped tights. The video on view is a recording of the original 1968 performance.

# Gallery 501

## Portraits of the 70s

Many consider Warhol to have been a portrait artist, first and foremost. If one counts up his silkscreened, commissioned portraits and adds them to his cinematic portraits, which he called “screen tests,” the sum total exceeds over a thousand subjects.

This gallery has been installed to evoke Warhol’s *Portraits of the 70s* exhibition, which opened at The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, in November 1979. Curated by Warhol’s close friend David Whitney, the exhibition included 56 double-portraits of artists, fashion designers, collectors, art dealers, socialites, and friends, as well as one of his mother, Julia, who passed away in 1972.

The essay by Robert Rosenblum in the exhibition catalogue described Warhol as the “ideal court painter to the 1970s international aristocracy” and placed his work in the venerable European tradition of
portrait painting.

The exhibition foregrounded Warhol’s extraordinary stylistic diversity and highly developed sense of color, while also openly showcasing an aspect of his painting practice that he characterized as “business art.” As his former associate Bob Colacello reflected, “After the 1979 Whitney show, the private-portrait business hit new heights. I estimate that in the early eighties Andy was painting about fifty clients a year.” At $40,000 for a two-panel portrait, the private commissions added another $2 million to annual profits. Keenly attuned to the shifting relationship between high art and contemporary culture, Warhol was unapologetic in his incorporation of lucrative business models as part of his art practice.

### Athletes

In 1977 art collector and sports enthusiast Richard Weisman commissioned Andy Warhol to create the *Athletes* portrait series. Warhol exhaustively photographed ten famous sports figures, generating nearly 600 Polaroids. These served as the source material for over 200 paintings as well as a print portfolio, making it one of Warhol’s most prolific series. Each sitter was paid $15,000 and received a portrait for participating, unlike with many of Warhol’s commissioned portraits. While the series received a disappointing commercial response, Warhol gained a newfound admiration for athletes: “I really got to love the athletes because they are the really big stars.”

### Commissioned Portraits Acetates

When making portraits, Warhol often used the Polaroid Big Shot, a camera known for its excellent picture quality. Warhol liked the immediacy of the Polaroid- the photographs developed in seconds, allowing him to quickly select from the multiple images of his celebrity clients. The chosen image was enlarged and transferred to clear acetate film for Warhol to edit further, cropping the picture to arrive at the portrait’s final dimensions. The acetate was then used to expose the image onto a silkscreen coated with light-sensitive emulsion. Warhol printed the photographic silkscreen on his painted canvas to create the final portrait. These acetates were an essential part of Warhol’s process, acting as a bridge between photography and painting. Warhol saved thousands of them, which are now part of the museum’s collection.

# Gallery 503

## WARHOL AND THE AMIGA

In the summer of 1985 Warhol was given his first Amiga 1000 home computer by Commodore International, and enthusiastically signed on with the company as a brand ambassador. For their launch, Commodore planned a theatrical performance, which featured Warhol onstage at Lincoln Center with rock-n-roll icon and the lead singer of Blondie, Debbie Harry. In front of a live audience Warhol used the new computer software ProPaint to create a portrait of Harry. He later made a series of digital drawings including a *Campbell’s Soup Can*, *Botticelli’s Venus*, and *Flowers*. The video of the launch performance and these early computer-based artworks are a testament to Warhol’s engagement with and embrace of new technology.

Commodore went bankrupt in 1994, and Warhol’s digital images were frozen on obsolete hard drives and discs in the archives of the museum for nearly 20 years. In 2014, contemporary digital artist Corey Arcangel organized a collaboration with Carnegie Mellon University, the Carnegie Museum of Art, and The Andy Warhol Museum to recover the lost drawings. The team spent months working to extract the data and reverse engineering the original software to be able to view the files.

Although, Warhol spoke about the desire to print these images and distribute them as artworks in an interview in *Amiga World*, this wish never came to pass. Today visitors can experience Warhol’s digital drawings on an interactive model created by The Warhol in collaboration with local design studio, Ion Tank.

Amiga 1000 Personal Computer, 1986
Original Amiga 1000 Personal Computer owned by Andy Warhol with associated software. Developed by Jay Miner, The Amiga 1000 was first introduced to the public in July 1985. By incorporating gaming technology, it was the only personal computer with a platform designed to handle graphics, sound, and video, making it both the first multimedia computer and a favorite among graphic artists and illustrators. Even with the additional features, the Amiga was still the fastest and most affordable computer on the market. The price of the Amiga 1000 was set at $1,295 and came with 256KB of RAM, compared to a Macintosh, which had only 128KB and sold for $2,495. Despite all this, low sales combined with poor management caused the company to go bankrupt by 1994, leaving its achievements largely forgotten.

### Details of Renaissance Paintings (Sandro Botticelli, *Birth of Venus*, 1482), 1984, 1998.1.307

In 1984 Warhol devoted an entire series of prints and paintings to historical painters of the Renaissance. The most iconic subject from this series was Sandro Botticelli’s 15th century masterpiece, *The Birth of* *Venus*. Botticelli’s work depicted a young nymph rising from a clamshell; her body was lean and delicate, and she shyly covered her nakedness with her long, golden locks. In his 1984 version, Warhol leaves out Venus’s figure and brings the focus to her face and hair by cropping the image at the neck. One can see stylistic similarities to his famous portraits of Marilyn Monroe.

Although Warhol sourced images from Renaissance masters for this series, he maintains his signature Pop palette and close attention to cropping and editing— techniques first gleaned from his early work as a commercial illustrator. Here Warhol takes from history, but makes it his own.

# Gallery 402

## Ladies and Gentlemen

Warhol’s *Ladies and Gentlemen* series, created in 1974 – 75, is one of his largest and most lucrative commissions. Italian collector Luciano Anselmino asked Warhol to create a series of over 100 paintings and prints of anonymous “transvestites”—a now outdated term to describe trans women or drag queens. Warhol more than doubled the commission by making 268 paintings, approximately 65 drawings and a portfolio of ten prints. He also took an inordinately large number of Polaroids of the models, totaling more than 500 photographs.

While Warhol privately recorded the names of each model, they were never identified publicly during his lifetime. Here on view for the first time is every model’s name and a brief biography. Many were public figures-- Wilhelmina Ross starred in a theater troupe called Hot Peaches and Marsha P. Johnson was a well-known activist and participated in the Stonewall riots in 1969.

In his paintings, Warhol obscured missing teeth, synthetic wigs, or the model’s masculine features and instead highlighted their dramatic poses, and joyful, glamorous appearances. This work has remained on the margins of Warhol’s exhibition history, but here in a complete view of the various mediums of the series, one can see the experimentation, care and exuberance in Warhol’s practice. Although four decades have passed since their creation, these paintings still speak to current debates around gender presentation, and civil rights, activism and visibility for the trans community.

### Luciano Anselmino

The *Ladies and Gentlemen* series was commissioned by Turin-based art dealer Luciano Anselmino, whom Warhol met through Alexander Lolas, one of his earliest collectors and supporters in New York. Anselmino worked with Warhol previously on a commission of portraits of surrealist photographer Man Ray and four portraits of himself. The enclosed Polaroids were taken for Anselmino’s portrait commission in 1973.

It was Anselmino who came up with the title *Ladies and Gentlemen.* His initial request was for “funny-looking” drag queens with “heavy beards,” which is what led Warhol to attempt to photograph his studio assistant Bob Colacello for the series. Warhol’s final portraits capture a glamour and femininity that stand in contrast to Anselmino’s original request.

### Bob Colacello

Warhol originally tried to photograph his assistant Bob Colacello in a wig for the series. This vitrine features Polaroids from that sitting. They reveal a hint of humor and lack the theatricality of a sincere performance of gender. After a few tries, Warhol and Colacello agreed they needed authentic drag queens for the portraits. Colacello and fellow studio assistant Ronnie Cutrone scouted models from underground nightclubs in New York like the iconic Gilded Grape. For the final commission, Warhol hired 14 models—nine of which were used in paintings while others were reserved for drawings or prints.

### Photographs by Robert Bruzzo of the original opening in Italy, 1974

The 105 commissioned canvases were first exhibited at the Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara in October 1975, and were documented in the enclosed exhibition catalogue, published in Milan for the occasion. These photographs show Warhol at the opening signing books and posters and walking through a large print that he had hoped to turn into wallpaper. In addition to the paintings consigned to Anselmino, over 150 canvases remained in Warhol’s studio. Although a limited number appeared in exhibitions or entered collections during the 1970s, the series remained largely unknown during Warhol’s lifetime, especially in the United States. When Warhol died, 124 *Ladies and Gentlemen* canvases remained in the studio, all but 19 stretched but unseen.

### Broadway

Warhol shot forty-seven Polaroids of Broadway and painted nineteen portraits of her. Broadway is one of the least extravagant models in the series, photographed wearing a teased wig, black boa, and light makeup. Her wig comes into play compositionally, acting almost like a mane around her neck. Her poses and facial expressions are both coquettish and provocative, showing her confidence and her charm. In one portrait, Broadway wraps her fingers delicately under her chin, supporting her head. Her hands and wig create different zones that Warhol could exploit with color, introducing elements of abstraction into her portrait.

### Marsha P. Johnson

Often referred to as Saint Marsha, Marsha P. Johnson is the most well-known model for the *Ladies and Gentlemen* series. She was a fixture of the New York City queer community, an activist, a sex worker, and a drag performer. Many have credited Johnson as the catalyst for the Stonewall riots and the subsequent fight for gay liberation. Her activism included founding STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries) with Sylvia Rivera. Established in 1970, the STAR House provided shelter for homeless LGBTQ+ youth. Johnson battled racism and transphobia within the gay liberation movement and her own personal struggles with mental illness. In 1992, she was found dead in the Hudson River. While the death was ruled a suicide, it is believed that Johnson was the victim of a hate crime. In 2012, the NYPD agreed to reopen her case, which is currently under investigation.

### Vicki Peters

Vicki Peters, another January 1975 model, signed the Polaroids as ‘Vicki’. Her surname, Peters, was taken from one of the signed releases that were found for the later model sittings. For Peters’ photo shoot, Warhol took twenty-eight standard portraits with the Big Shot camera and seven full-length views with the square format Polaroid. In her full-length pictures, she is trapped in a corner but boldly confronts the camera head on. One factor that sets Peters apart from the other models is her scowl. While she looks extremely confident both in the headshots and in the full body shots, Peters smiles only in a few, preferring to show her serious side in front of the camera. Peters’ image was turned into two collages and three drawings, and as well as prints for the portfolio.

### Easha McCleary

Easha McCleary signed one Polaroid as E.M. and another as Easha when she sat for Warhol in January 1975. While most of the *Ladies and Gentlemen* paintings were completed by that time, Warhol continued shooting new subjects to develop more prints for the portfolio. While he only made a few paintings, drawings, and collages of Easha, Warhol took 54 Polaroids of her, more than any other subject in the series. The number of Polaroids attests to Warhol’s fascination with Easha as a model. Her exaggerated features and attitude evidently appealed to Warhol-- Easha expertly pouted and vamped for the camera, displaying a vibrant personality.

### Devan Shimoyama

### *Miss Toto*, 2018

Miss Toto (born, 1992, William Evans IV) is a bodybuilder as well as a drag queen based in Miami, Florida. In life, Miss Toto towers at six feet tall, and commands space with a muscular physique. In this portrait, however, Shimoyama, paints her body in soft pink with little detail, drawing attention to her feminine, flamboyantly made up face and delicate hands. Eyes circulate behind her head in a sea of holographic glitter, presenting an image of femininity and softness.

Inspired by Warhol’s *Ladies and Gentlemen* paintings, Shimoyama pays homage to drag queens of color. For Shimoyama naming the performer is important in his own work and in understanding Warhol’s work: "Something I really stand by is that queerness is a constant state of flux. It is magic. Taken together *Ladies and Gentlemen* doesn't depict ‘the transvestite.’ Instead it shows queerness' magical flux in portraits of remarkable individuals who are finally being recognized by name.”

Devan Shimoyama’s first solo museum exhibition, *Cry, Baby,* is featured on the museum’s second floor. See more of his work there.

### Wilhelmina Ross

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Wilhelmina Ross moved to New York City in 1970. Her work in New York’s underground theater scene put her in the same circles as playwright Ronald Ravel, filmmaker Jack Smith, and actor Mario Montez, all collaborators with Warhol in the 1960s. Ross quickly became one of the leading ladies in the theater troupe *Hot Peaches* from 1973-1974. Warhol created seventy-three paintings based on seven Polaroids, twenty-nine drawings, and five collage portraits of Wilhemina, the most of any subject in the series. In November 1974, Ross moved to Puerto Rico, where she lived for ten years. After learning that she had AIDS, she spent the last two years of her life with her mother in her home state of Missouri. Her legacy lives on, not only as a glamorous performer of queer theater, but also as a star of Warhol’s *Ladies and Gentlemen*.

### Helen/Harry Morales

Helen/Harry Morales signed her Polaroids with two different names, identifying herself by both her legal and drag names. Corey Tippin, who met Morales at the Gilded Grape and brought her to the Factory at 33 Union Square West to pose for Warhol, remembers that she “was so good” that she was asked to return the following day. Her appearance drastically changed between the two photo shoots. On one day, she wore a large bouffant wig with an unbuttoned red shirt. For the next session, she donned a short, modern hairstyle, oversized designer glasses, a striped turtleneck, and heavier makeup. Out of the two sittings, Warhol made thirty-one paintings, mostly using Polaroids that featured the oversized wig. Morales was a charismatic and willing model, displaying a variety of expressions and shifting moods suddenly to suggest surprise, coyness, and joy.

### Iris

Warhol took thirty-six Polaroids of Iris and created twenty-four paintings. While she did not sign any of her Polaroids, she was identified by Corey Tippin, a friend and a frequent face in The Factory. Corey Tippin invited Iris to the Factory to be photographed by Warhol, and she ultimately appeared in 36 Polaroids and 24 paintings. Iris appears extremely polished, sultry, and confident in her portraits. She poses with and without her short pageboy wig, in stark contrast to the theatrically large hairstyles worn by many of the other *Ladies and Gentlemen* models. In one photograph, she mimics Wilhelmina’s pose, with an elbow jutting over her head, creating jarring lines. Another portrait shows Iris gently covering her face with her hands, her parted fingers framing her eyes. The final paintings of Iris feature a seductive pose in which she appears in profile, looking up and exposing her bare shoulder.

### Monique

Monique (last name unknown) was one of the models recruited late in Warhol’s process of shooting for *Ladies and Gentlemen*. Warhol took 38 Polaroids of Monique, but only included her in the print portfolio due to the late date of her sitting. Warhol experimented with different film and cameras on Monique, making both color and black-and-white instant portraits of her. Warhol regularly used a Polaroid Big Shot camera, which has a fixed focal length of 39 inches—rather than adjusting the lens, he needed to physically move back and forth to bring the subject into focus. Here Warhol used a different camera, allowing him to capture Monique from different distances, showcasing her understated fashion sense. She wore dark slacks and a matching crew neck top; but the color portrait Polaroids celebrate the beauty of her luminous eyes and glossy red lips.

### Alphanso Panell

While not much is known about Alphanso Panell, Jimmy Camicia, co-founder of the gay theater troupe *Hot Peaches*, remembers Panell: “Many years ago, while walking with Marsha [P. Johnson] in the meat market area, she stopped to talk to Alphanso, although I don’t think that was the name Marsha used. They were friends. My impression of Panell was that she was very soft spoken, gentle, and kind.” This sense of softness and kindness that Camicia describes comes across in the thirty Polaroids that Warhol took during Panell’s sitting in 1974. Warhol only used seven of the Polaroids to make sixty portraits, more than every other model except Wilhelmina Ross.

### Unidentified Model

This model, the only person featured in *Ladies and Gentlemen* who was never identified by an outside source and did not sign their Polaroid, remains anonymous to this day. Warhol shot twenty Polaroids of this model and made eight paintings, two drawings, and a preparatory collage. Her eccentric personality is conveyed by her large, expressive eyes and quirky personal style. Her large signet ring and colorful paisley blouse are clearly visible in the source Polaroids. Warhol’s paintings, however, draw attention to her curly hair and long, extravagant eyelashes.

### Ivette and Lurdes

Ivette and Lurdes shared their sitting—their joint portraits, which include 14 photographs and 29 paintings, are the only ones in Warhol’s series to feature more than one model in a composition. He also created individual Polaroids of each, capturing both their unique personas and the intimacy and companionship they shared. Posing together, Lurdes appears more dominant, with Ivette lurking shyly behind her in a supporting role. Ivette is shielded and protected by Lurdes, perhaps mimicking their relationship on the streets. Warhol ultimately also made 22 solo portraits of Lurdes, capturing her strong presence and subtle glamour. She is quickly recognizable with her asymmetrical flamenco hairstyle and large satin bow.

# Gallery 401

## Return to painting

In 1965, following the opening of his *Flowers* exhibition at Sonnabend Gallery, Paris, Warhol announced his retirement from painting in order to devote himself to filmmaking. While this proved to be a facetious statement, the period of the late 1960s was certainly marked by a shift of emphasis in his practice away from traditional media.

In 1972 Warhol came out of “retirement” with a major exhibition of works depicting Chairman Mao which signaled an energetic return to the discipline of painting. From this moment until his death in 1987, Warhol created more paintings than at any other point in his career. He experimented with a diverse range of stylistic approaches, reprised themes from his 1960s output, and engaged with new currents in the art world. While he engaged predominantly with figuration throughout his career, he also made important contributions to the development of abstraction in the 1970s and 80s.

### Oxidation Painting, 1978, 1998.1.213

The *Oxidation* paintings were created by urinating onto a canvas primed with a metallic paint. The resulting chemical reaction (oxidation) created blooms of color, which changed in concentration. Warhol’s unique process of abstract painting playfully echoes Jackson Pollock’s dynamic “drip” paintings and perhaps also recalls the medieval alchemists who transmuted base materials into gold (urine into art). Warhol and his “collaborators” (friends and studio assistants) experimented with both pattern and coloration in these paintings. Variation in the maker’s fluid and food intake affected the oxidation impact in the paint, for instance, Warhol was particularly thrilled by the striking colorations cased by his studio assistant Ronnie Cutrone, who was taking vitamin B supplements.

### Collaboration, 1984-1985, 1998.1.485

Warhol’s return to painting is partly credited to collaborative works made with the painter Jean-Michel Basquiat, a young American artist of Haitian and Puerto Rican descent. Basquiat first gained attention in the 1970s for work that mixed words, symbols, and images derived from pop culture, street graffiti, and primitive art. Like Warhol, Basquiat appropriated pictures from existing sources, including books such as *Gray’s Anatomy* by Henry Gray and *Symbol Sourcebook: An Authoritative Guide to International Graphic Symbols* by Henry Dreyfuss. Warhol and Basquiat admired each other’s work and became close friends. Over the course of a one-year period they created almost 100 paintings together. A highly publicized exhibition in September 1985 at the Tony Shafrazi Gallery showcased 16 of these artworks.

### Skull, 1976, 2002.4.24

Warhol’s *Skull* paintings of the mid-1970s have often been seen as *memento mori*, or symbols of death and vanity. *Memento mori,* from Latin, translates as “Remember that you are mortal” or “Remember you will die.” The skull paintings are rich with references to death as well as birth. One could read the cast shadow of the skull as the shape of a fetus head and the pastel colors as references to springtime, the season of rebirth.

# Mao Wallpaper, 1974

Warhol’s *Mao* wallpaper was first exhibited in 1974 at the Musée Galliera in Paris with the *Mao* paintings installed directly over it. Though seemingly emphasizing art as décor, this exhibition cleverly commented on the usage and perception of Mao’s image in China and in the U.S. Ironically, the portrait of a communist leader who focused on eradicating consumerism in his native country became available for purchase by the elite in the capitalist West.

# Gallery 301 – Archives

## Archives Study Center

Andy Warhol’s passion for collecting is legendary. The vast assortment of items he assembled is one of the most extensive archives for an artist of the 20th century. It also represents one of the last great collections of the pre-digital era.

Estimated at 500,000 objects, the archives collection is the definitive source of research material and information on Andy Warhol and his work. It is also a primary resource for the study of Pop art, the evolution of 20th-century art, and the profound changes in popular culture that occurred during Warhol’s life.

The Archives Study Center is devoted to preserving and making available this comprehensive variety of historical materials for scholarly study, and for support of the museum’s programming.

The archives contain a full range of the materials Warhol used in the creation of his art, along with his business records, correspondence, photographs, scrapbooks filled with clippings about his life, personal music library, audiotapes and transcripts, issues of *Interview* magazine and other published materials, clothing, furniture, and collectibles, including works by other artists. His *Time Capsules* are central to the archives collection.

## Time Capsules

Warhol’s massive conceptual artwork, the *Time Capsules* are monolithic, modular, and free-form: 610 flimsy containers hide varied contents, placed by Warhol, which are largely archival in nature. Conceived while moving his studio in 1974, the *Time Capsules* became a daily ritual; the accumulation occupied the artist until his death in 1987.

Each *Time Capsule* (or *TC*) holds on average more than 500 objects: letters, photographs, publications, recordings, clothing, food, medicine, toys, antiques, ticket stubs, and small works of art by Warhol and
other artists.

This diversity is Warhol’s best expression of his statement, “Pop Art is liking things.” Filled with things that he loved, the *TCs* may be Warhol’s truest self-portrait, or an autobiography.

Warhol obsessively documented everything around him—from celebrities to consumer products to everyday ephemera. The *TCs* are a key aspect of his practice and, alongside his paintings, photography, filmmaking, video, and contributions to numerous other media, they reveal how much his art was rooted in the world he experienced.

The *TCs* echo artworks by Warhol’s contemporaries (such as Arman’s *Poubelles* and *Accumulations,* and Daniel Spoerri’s *Tableaux Pièges*) and precursors (such as Marcel Duchamp’s *White Box*). They also resonate in the work of many artists today (such as Song Dong’s *Waste Not)*.

Not long after beginning the *TCs*, Warhol discussed exhibiting them on a huge shelving unit displaying every box. He envisioned each would be for sale at an identical price, but none could be opened for inspection before purchase. He believed that the public would buy boxes of his life, in a sense, just as they clamored for the effects of Hollywood stars. That exhibition never happened.

All of the *Time Capsules* are in the collection of the museum; the contents of one are displayed around you.

# Time Capsule 300

*“I opened a Time Capsule and every time I do it’s a mistake, because I drag it back out and start looking through it.”*

* Andy Warhol, *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, May 24, 1984.

*Time Capsule 300* is comprised of 848 individual items related to Andy Warhol’s business and personal activities from 1975 – 1980, with the bulk of materials dating from July 1980. *Time Capsule 300* was first opened on May 17, 2010 as part of the six-year *Time Capsules* Cataloguing Project, begun in 2007. The processing of this box – which entailed unpacking, sorting, describing and applying accession numbers to each of the 848 items – took over 60 hours to complete. While every *Time Capsule* in the collection has now been opened and inventoried, the staff of the Archives are still in the process of researching and cataloguing the contents of these boxes. Each object continues to deepen our understanding of Warhol’s life and work, both benefiting and profoundly impacting Warhol scholarship and exhibitions over the past twenty years. The contents of *Time Capsule 300* are on display in the cases around the room.

# Making Waves: The filming of *San Diego Surf*

At the end of Warhol’s 1968 film *Lonesome Cowboys,* two cowboys ride off into the distance while discussing surfing and their plans to head to California. Four months later Warhol would begin filming *San Diego Surf,* switching one masculine archetype for another.

Southern California was an early center for modern surfing and, with the proximity to Hollywood, filmmakers soon began capitalizing on the growing interest in the culture. Teen surfing movies became popular through 1950s and 1960s, depicting carefree and clean adolescent fun, a drastic juxtaposition to turbulent social and political issues of the time. Warhol was familiar with the genre and the aesthetic experience of surf culture would have certainly appealed to him.

For his take on the surfing genre, Warhol rented a beachfront home in La Jolla, outside San Diego, and cast superstars Viva and Taylor Mead as a married couple trying to ingratiate themselves with local surfers. As in Warhol’s other films, *San Diego Surf’s* plot was loosely scripted and relied on the improvisation of its actors, yet Warhol noted in his book *POPism* (1980), the California lifestyle unexpectedly influenced their performances:

“Everybody was so happy being in La Jolla that the New York problems we usually made our movies about went away - the edge came right off everybody. …I guess that's why the whole thing turned out to be more of a memento of a bunch of friends taking a vacation together than a movie.”

# Label 1:

Photographs of the film’s surfers: Tom Hompertz, Louis Waldon (red shorts), and Joe Dallasandro (blue shorts)

Of the three, Hompertz was the only trained surfer, but the surfing film had little actual surfing.

# Label 2:

Photograph of Taylor Mead and Joe Dallesandro

Taylor Mead was already a well-known underground film star when he met Andy Warhol in 1963. He played the title role in the parody *Tarzan and Jane Regained…Sort Of*, one of Warhol’s earliest films.

Joe Dallesandro was discovered while visiting a friend when he bumped into Warhol’s crew shooting *Loves of Ondine* in a nearby apartment. Dallesandro was subsequently featured in several of Warhol’s films, and after his Factory days, he went on to star in over forty European and American films.

# Label 3:

Center of vitrine: Photograph of Ingrid Superstar

Left: Photograph of Viva

Right: Photograph of Tom Hompertz

# Label 4:

Contact sheets depicting the filming of *San Diego Surf*

Unlike many of his films, Warhol utilized two cameras for the shoot. Looking closely, you can see Warhol using the Auricon camera and Morrissey operating the Arriflex camera.

# Label 5:

Photograph of Tom Hompertz and Louis Waldon

# Resurfacing

*San Diego Surf* was never released during Warhol’s lifetime. Filmed in May 1968, the post-production of the film was dramatically halted by Valerie Solanas’ assassination attempt on Warhol the following month. Filmed during a transitional period in Warhol films, it would be one of the last films Warhol was directly involved with shooting.

In 1995, the Andy Warhol Foundation commissioned Paul Morrissey, Warhol’s assistant on the shoot, to finish the film using the original editing notes created by Jed Johnson. Over forty years since its filming, *San Diego Surf* finally had its premiere at the Museum of Modern Art on October 16, 2012, as part of the To Save and Project film preservation series.

# Label 6:

Jed Johnson’s handwritten editing notes

Jed met Warhol while delivering a Western Union telegraph to the factory in 1968. After working odd jobs to make ends meet, Johnson was hired to edit *San Diego Surf*. When Andy was hospitalized, Johnson would visit him daily.

# Label 7:

Datebook from 1968

The book is opened to show title ideas for the film. It was also known as “Surf for Life”, “Surfing in San Diego“, “Surfing Movie”, and “Surf“.

# Label 8:

Photograph of Russell B Maxfield and Tom Hompertz being filmed by Andy Warhol

# Label 9:

Warhol’s hospital bracelet from his shooting in June 1968

The accompanying photograph shows Warhol recuperating in his hospital room.

## Warhol’s Collection

Warhol is best known as a Pop artist, but his great passion for other artists’ work drove him to build an incredible collection of art and objects that spanned centuries, genres, classifications, and forms.

In 1977, his personal collection of folk art was exhibited in New York at the Museum of American Folk Art.

Warhol was keenly interested in Art Deco and collected pieces by forgotten designers well before they came back in fashion. His horde of Art Deco and Native American objects alone could have formed the core of a major museum collection.

He owned works of fine art by Carpeaux and Canova; Degas, Picasso, and other early modernists; American and European Surrealists; and many of his contemporaries. His collection also included fine antique furniture and decorative objects by Herter, Dunand, Ruhlmann, Tiffany, Ohr, and Daum; dozens of photographs by Edward Curtis and Man Ray; original commercial illustrations by Maxfield Parrish; and a Rolls-Royce.

Other focuses of Warhol’s acquisitive eye included Art Nouveau, 20th century wristwatches and jewelry, traditional Japanese objects including a samurai’s armor, a significant but far smaller quantity of pre-Columbian items from the Americas, and other objects from antiquity.

One year after the artist’s death, Warhol’s collection was sold during a 10-day auction in New York City*—*an extraordinarily long time for a single estate. Proceeds benefited the work of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, as set forth in his will.

The sale offered 10,000 items and rightly received much attention from the media and the public. The bidding war over the 1940s-era figural cookie jars pushed prices far beyond their estimates, as was true for most of the sale.

Much of what was not sold is now part of the Warhol Museum’s archives collection. Almost all of these objects are mid-20th-century American in origin. A small portion is on display.

# Gallery 201

## Devan Shimoyama: Cry, Baby

*Devan Shimoyama: Cry, Baby* is the first museum solo exhibition of Devan Shimoyama, Philadelphia-born painter and professor at Carnegie Mellon University.

Spanning his burgeoning career, this exhibition includes painting, photography and sculpture, as well as a series of new works that are on view for the first time.

Shimoyama creates a complex world full of contradictions and vulnerability, and constructs fantastical spaces that are undeniably queer. He presents race, gender, and identity as fluid and unstable. His bold figures refuse to comply with societal preconceptions of what blackness, boyhood, or masculinity should look like.

In these mythical spaces, Shimoyama’s subjects are not oppressed but permitted to act freely: they embody feminine myths; delight in fields of butterflies and flowers; cry tears of resilience; emote without shame or judgment. Skin tones change according to the landscape or surroundings, taking on the black of the night sky, the orange of distant sunset, or yellow and gold from regal fabrics.

Born in 1989, Shimoyama takes inspiration from his mentor Mickalene Thomas and is influenced by Kerry James Marshall and Chris Ofili, members of a generation of contemporary African American and black painters who are working to address the absence of black protagonists in the canon of figurative painting. Shimoyama, now a part of this movement, offers an essential and unique vision of imaginative, deeply personal portraits and enchanted landscapes that remind us all of the difficulty and necessity of finding one’s place in the world.

### Andy Warhol, *Boy Book*, 1950s

Andy Warhol emerged as a young artist in New York during the 1950s, a time when homosexuality was repressed and policed. In spite of this, he daringly immersed himself in queer circles and put his sexuality on full view with a series of intimate drawings of young men. These sketches were displayed at his first exhibition in 1956 at the Bodley Gallery and titled *Studies for a Boy Book*. The show was met with criticism and negative remarks about the sentimentality of the work.

While Warhol ultimately shifted his practice away from the personal and emotional, hundreds of drawings remain from this period. This drawing speaks to the tender and sensitive nature of Warhol’s early work. It also creates a direct connection to the work of Devan Shimoyama, who similarly paints a world of fantasy and safety as a strategy of survival against hostility and homophobia.

## In The Mirror

For his graduate application to Yale, Shimoyama submitted an early self-portrait—an untitled work with tar on his face and glitter poured over the canvas. From this point forward, Shimoyama focused on self-portraiture and began creating paintings of his figure splitting and dueling. He eventually settled on an image of a single figure,in *Cry, Baby*. After making early paintings that reference violence or depict the black body in pain, Shimoyama shifted the focus of his practice by refusing to perpetuate images of black violence that circulate constantly in society.

“I decided to paint fictional representations of figures trying to navigate through other spaces. I’d rather create images of black men searching for safe spaces and empowered states.”

He began imagining utopian landscapes, embedding symbols of strength in his portraits, and applying shiny objects, evocative of drag culture, like glitter, rhinestones and costume jewelry, to his canvases. Tears are also a recurring motif, first appearing in his 2016 painting *Cry, Baby*, and continuing through to his most recent works.

### Michael, 2018

Unlike the young boys in Shimoyama’s barbershop paintings, who cry in solitude and isolation, in *Michael* a young man is seen cutting his own hair absent of tears, filled with self-confidence and strength.

In paintings like this portrait and the adjacent *Anthony*, the figures are presented in their private bathrooms, shaving and clipping their own hair. Rather than projecting a sense of helplessness or fear, these men are seen as strong and in control, imbued with the sense of agency and resilience that many of Shimoyama’s earlier, mythical figures embody. Shimoyama uses queer and feminine details here, such as the blossoms covering Michael’s body or the vintage earrings embedded in his eyes, to evoke strength. The bright lights behind him frame his head like a golden crown.

### Cry, Baby, 2016

“The grave is part retiring myself, but also it’s a gesture of putting a version of myself to rest. It’s about resurrection and renewal. The tears are nourishing and sustaining, but also, here in this mythical space, the figure is sowing tears of sorrow and tears of joy.”

**-** Devan Shimoyama

In this early self-portrait Shimoyama depicts himself as a young boy, embracing a heavy tombstone with the phrase *CRY BABY* carved across its face. *Cry Baby* is a common name used to taunt young boys who are perceived to be overly feminine or emotional, but here the term is transformed into an action. In the title, Shimoyama inserts a comma, making the insult into an invitation, one that a mother might say to her emotional child, “*Cry*, Baby.” Ultimately, Shimoyama is after a sense of permission. This self-portrait marked a symbolic shift in the artist’s personal life and was meant to be a cathartic image signifying self-love and acceptance.

## In The Moonlight

it matters not

which part of you

is lit by the sun

i have adjusted my eyes

to the darkness

and black

has never been

more luminous

- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

It is rare that Shimoyama paints his figures in black, but after moving studios to a much brighter space, in early 2017, he began to work at night. The night sky became a focus of his work and he created a series of moonlight paintings. In these works, Shimoyama incorporates snakes and other symbols of strength and power—his subjects’ bright, diamond eyes pierce through the darkness, thriving in the shadows.

At the time that he was completing these works, the 2017 film *Moonlight*, adapted from Tarell Alvin McCraney’s play *In Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue,* debuted in theaters.In the film, the young protagonist struggles to navigate a world without a strong, father figure. He tries to come to terms with his growing desires and ultimately the alienation and shame he feels for his queerness—themes that also resonate strongly in Shimoyama’s paintings.

## On Fire Island

In 2017 Devan Shimoyama was invited to participate in the Fire Island Artist Residency. He had planned to create new work based on interactions with other black men on the island, but was surprised to find a near total absence of people of color when he arrived. He spent most of the residency on his own exploring the island and its hidden spaces, collecting pieces of driftwood and taking pictures.

During his stay, Sandra Bland was found hanged in a jail cell in Texas following her arrest for a minor traffic violation, and white supremacist Dylann Roof murdered nine churchgoers at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Alabama. In the face of this violence Shimoyama turned inward and started reading texts about queer counterculture, witchcraft, and chaos magic. This period of study and intense reflection inspired a performance on the beach. At sunrise and alone, Shimoyama covered his body in glitter and embodied the mythic, magical figures of his paintings, summoning a sense of protection and strength in the face of rampant anti-black violence and death.

### *Flood*, 2016

Painted just after the presidential election of 2016, *Flood* captures the sense of fear and shock that gripped much of the nation. The figure in this painting weeps, shielding his face with his hands while two serpents circle his body with menacing fangs. Unlike other depictions of snakes in 2016, here the poisonous creatures appear unhinged and threatening. Teardrops flood the solid green background, and a bright, crimson full moon lends a sense of impending dread. Underneath his folded knees is a crumpled American flag and the figure nearly disappears, his skin tone blending with the unnatural green background.

Shimoyama created this painting quickly, in one night, after the election. His work following this period takes on a renewed sense of celebration and focuses on the fantasy of safe spaces, suggesting that while the world may become dangerous and uncontrollable, like the circling snakes, his sense of optimism and pride would not be suppressed.

### Weed Picker, 2018

This large painting hints at both the unity and divisions within Black popular culture. *Weed Picker* depicts Shimoyama on his personal property, beautifying his land.  His shirt features the names of characters from the 90s sitcom *Living Single*, a comedy series about a group of black men and women living as friends in a brownstone in Brooklyn. The series was a favorite of the artist’s growing up, in part because he saw in it a world where blackness could exist without the influence of white culture. The shoes in the background, a pair of high-end Yeezy sneakers designed by rap artist Kanye West, are tied at the laces and thrown over a telephone line. The dangling shoes reference both gang culture and political rifts within the African American community.  As in many of Shimoyama’s complex paintings, *Weed Picker* suggests that strife is lurking in the background even during seemingly peaceful moments.

## The Barbershop

Barbershops are considered important sites of fraternity, kinship, and safety within the African American community. Yet, they are not harmonious spaces for all-- while straight men may find connection and support there, queerness is often kept secret or silent. In a new body of work, Shimoyama draws on his personal experience to challenge and complicate prevailing depictions of union and harmony. He creates paintings of the barbershop that transform a hyper masculine space into a nurturing environment where men and boys can cry and emote. In Shimoyama’s barbershop queerness is accepted and embraced.

Shimoyama constructs his barbershop out of effeminate details—glitter, flowers, and crystal teardrops—and creates a nurturing hive of feminine warmth and comfort. His scenes take inspiration from veteran painter Kerry James Marshall, who was the first to elevate the black barbershop to the subject of high art in his painting, *De Style*, in 1993. Although Shimoyama depicts young boys crying, their tears are not of sorrow, but of relief and release, a reimagining of queer expression as an accepted part of the contemporary black male experience.

### For Tamir, 2018

Tamir Rice was twelve years old when he was shot and killed in Cleveland, Ohio by two police officers for waving a plastic gun around a playground. His death and the following acquittals of the police officers involved led to public outcry in 2014 and growing attention to violence against black men and youth.

In this sculpture, Shimoyama memorializes Tamir Rice’s life and tragic death with a commonplace rubber swing that he covers in delicate silk flowers and crystal-like rhinestones. The ornamentation directly references traditions of public memorials or gravesites, but it also challenges the notion of black masculinity by presenting a feminine sculpture for a young boy. Shimoyama shifts the gender presentation in his sculptures as a political device to generate new conversation, and ultimately to construct a new definition of black masculinity.

### February, 2018

*February* marks the birth and death month of Trayvon Martin, a 17 year-old African American teen who was shot and killed in 2012 by neighborhood watch officer, George Zimmerman. Martin was walking unarmed, with just an iced tea and Skittles in the front pocket of his black hoodie. Following the shooting and Zimmerman’s acquittal, the black hoodie became a national symbol of injustice, the systemic vilifying of African American men and boys, and a rallying cry against police brutality.

Here, just as with the sculptures *For Tamir,* Shimoyama deliberately challenges gender norms by covering the masculine hoodie in pink and red silk flowers and rhinestones that reference femininity and the costume traditions of drag culture. In an interview, Shimoyama explains: “Queerness is something that is complicated, as people don’t necessarily want to get near it. I understand that these black men. . . probably wouldn’t love their masculinity being compromised. . ., but I think it’s important that even within the black community we reexamine masculinity.”

### Snake Baby, 2016

“I see both the snake and the black male as beings that were uprooted from their origins and demonized in a new space. In this series of works, the snake and the figure have a symbiotic relationship.”

* Devan Shimoyama

Snakes appear frequently in Devan Shimoyama’s paintings as a potent symbolic presence. The figure sometimes balances the snake around his fingers or shoulders, and other times he wears the snake’s fangs near his mouth. The serpent is a creature that has carried dueling meanings in religious and spiritual traditions for centuries. For example, in the story of Adam and Eve, the serpent is perceived to be full of sin and deceit, while in Eastern spiritual traditions it is a symbol of strength. The African water deity Mami Wata is often depicted as a woman balancing a snake around her shoulders, and is a respected symbol of fertility and healing. Shimoyama’s snakes embody a complex history, signifying both power and menace.

### Butterfly Eater, 2017

There are few paintings that express a sense of joy and pleasure like *Butterfly Eater.* The utopian landscape is painted with an intense palette of rich crimson clouds and the warm orange of an evening sunset. The snake, which can seem threatening at times, here is completely sedated as the young figure feeds the serpent tiny blue butterflies. While teardrops are still present, suggesting that pain is never completely absent, they are painted in the distance and don’t surround the figure as in earlier paintings. The mythical settings that Shimoyama creates evoke a sense of euphoria—they are spaces where he can feel protected and free to act without consequence or shame.

### *Daphne*, 2015

In this painting Shimoyama fashions himself as *Daphne,* the beautiful mountain nymph who, in Greek mythology, was chased by an uninvited suitor, Apollo. To protect herself from Apollo’s aggressive pursuit, Daphne prays to her father, the river god Peneus, to turn her into a laurel tree and save her from bodily harm. Throughout the Italian Renaissance, Daphne was traditionally depicted at the moment of her metamorphosis, running from Apollo with her fingers sprouting into the leaves of a laurel tree.

In Shimoyama’s *Daphne*, the leaves sprouting from Shimoyama’s fingertips are covered with collaged eyes, taken from photographs, some sourced from magazines and others of his mother, aunt and grandmother. While *Daphne* may be a story of chase and violence, in these paintings Shimoyama cloaks himself in blossoms of motherly love. He finds refuge from pain, not from a father figure, but in the eyes of the women who raised him.