

PRESS RELEASE

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Williams College Museum of Art Presents
Warhola Becomes Warhol
Andy Warhol: Early Work
February 10–June 10, 2007

Williamstown, MA—The Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) presents **Warhola Becomes Warhol—Andy Warhol: Early Work**. Drawn from the museum's collection, this exhibition features Andy Warhol's early work—from 1952 through the late 1960s—demonstrating his evolution from commercial artist to Pop icon. **Warhola Becomes Warhol** contains over 50 works on paper and sculpture, including hand-colored off-set lithographs, blotted-line drawings, and rare artist books. The exhibition includes several rare pieces, including a unique, unbound, original manuscript of "Snow in the Street and Rain in the Sky," 1952. Also on view are several of Warhol's rarely displayed Polaroid portraits of celebrities, including Mick Jagger; working "dummies," or mock-ups, created for Warhol's *Interview* magazine; and an original collage (1966) that became his iconic cow wallpaper. Several later works, such as *Jackie* (1964) and *Self Portrait* (1986) will also be on display, allowing visitors to understand how the techniques that Warhol learned as a commercial artist became the vehicles he later employed to mass produce his artwork and create the Warhol brand. The exhibition will be on view through June 10, 2007. A series of related gallery talks and lectures are listed below.

"We see from Warhol's early commercial work how astute he was and how he constructed an identity for himself that made him a household name," says WCMA Director, Lisa Corrin. "We are grateful to have a major Warhol scholar, Professor Ondine Chavoya, on our faculty. His perspective on the artist will be complemented by those of a graduate student in our art history program, and

that of a young artist, Alex Donis, who is coming from Los Angeles for the opening and for a discussion with Professor Chavoya." The discussion will be held on Tuesday, February 27 at 7:00 pm at the museum, following the reception that celebrates the museum's spring exhibitions. All are invited to attend both events.

Corrin also states, "We are so grateful to Williams alumni for their ongoing and generous gifts to our collection, and in this case specifically to Richard Holmes, Class of 1946, who recently gave the balance of his Warhol collection to the museum."

This gift forms the centerpiece of this exhibition. Holmes, who worked for many years as an assistant headmaster and teacher of history and of African Studies at the Brooks School in North Andover, Mass., began collecting early Warhol art and ephemera before it was in vogue to do so. His first gift to WCMA came in 1995, consisting of 262 issues of *Interview* magazine from 1969 through 1991 and 10 books illustrated by the artist. His second gift of 62 works of art and 117 books were acquired in December of 2005. This collection will also be shown at the Brooks School.

Warhol has been cited as one of the most famous and famously controversial American artists of the second half of the 20th century. His astute eye explored the inventory of American contemporary consumerism in the '50s and '60s, and he wrestled with issues of artistic appropriation and mass production. A child of poor Czech immigrants, Andy Warhola was born and raised in an industrial section of Pittsburgh. In 1949, after formative experiences at Carnegie Tech (Carnegie Mellon), Andy Warhola came to New York to start a career as a commercial artist. In the 11 years that followed, Warhola became Warhol—generating a peculiarly "personalized" portfolio—each piece marking what is now regarded as one of New York's most successful careers in commercial illustration.

Andy Warhol became one of the most recognized American Pop artists of his day. His art, which was characterized by techniques and themes drawn from mass culture, employed the use of pseudo-industrial silkscreen process to create "commercial objects" such as Campbell soup can paintings. Warhol also used this same technique to portray celebrities such as Jackie Kennedy, Elizabeth Taylor, Mick Jagger, and Marilyn Monroe, as well as images of Chairman Mao and, yes, cows.

Programming

Gallery Talk: Andy Warhol: Early Work

Curators Lane Koster, Williams/Clark graduate student, Class of 2007, and Vivian Patterson, Curator of the Collection, preview the exhibition.

Wednesday, February 21

4:00 pm

Pop Art Dialogue: "Crumpled Butterflies and Borrowed Words: A Long Overdue Love Letter to Andy"

Join Professor Ondine Chavoya & California-based artist Alex Donis as they discuss the influence of Andy Warhol on Pop art and specifically on Donis's artistic practice.

Tuesday, February 27

7:00 pm

Gallery Talk: Warhol: Early Work

Ondine Chavoya, Assistant Professor of Art

Wednesday, April 11

12:10 pm

The Williams College Museum of Art is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Admission is free and the museum is wheelchair accessible. Publicity images for this exhibition and other current exhibitions are available for use by the press. Contact: Suzanne A. Silitch, Director of Public Relations and External Affairs, 413.597.3178; wcma@williams.edu; www.wcma.org.