



“Becoming Andy Warhol” Opens at UCCA Beijing

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The most comprehensive exhibition of Andy Warhol in China to date reconsiders the breadth of the legendary Pop artist’s output, including nearly 400 drawings, paintings, photographs, and films from the The Andy Warhol Museum.

Exhibition Period:

2021.7.3 - 2021.10.10

Location:

Great Hall

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BEIJING, China — Opening July 3, 2021 at UCCA Beijing and subsequently traveling to UCCA Edge in Shanghai, “Becoming Andy Warhol” is the most comprehensive exhibition of Andy Warhol (1928-1987) staged to date in China. This exhibition brings nearly 400 works selected exclusively from the collection of The Andy Warhol Museum (Pittsburgh), including works that are displayed for the first time outside of The Warhol, with new attention paid to Warhol as a photographer and filmmaker. The exhibition reconsiders Warhol’s innovative and versatile artistic legacy and is informed by recent scholarship that candidly examines his life and prolific output with a more holistic understanding. It includes both representative and lesser-known works from various phases and aspects of his career, asserting Warhol’s anticipation of hybridity and repetition as primary influences in contemporary visual culture. “Becoming Andy Warhol” is produced in collaboration with The Andy Warhol Museum and curated by José Carlos Diaz, Chief Curator, and Patrick Moore, Director. The exhibition is designed by Xiaoxi Chen.

Press material available at

ucca.org.cn/en/press

Structured in five sections, the exhibition crafts a non-linear exploration of the artist’s life and career through paintings, photographs, objects, and films, as well as archival items from his youth and images of Warhol as documented by contemporaries such as Stephen Shore and David McCabe. Through early drawings and historical photographs, “Origins” introduces the artist and his immigrant, Byzantine Catholic beginnings in working-class Pittsburgh, his close relationship and creative collaboration with his mother Julia Warhola, and Warhol’s successful foray into commercial art upon his move to New York City, where he created some of his first Pop paintings. This exhibition includes photographs and reconstructions of Warhol’s New York City department storefronts from the same period that were never before shown. “Warhol the Photographer” surveys the breadth of Warhol’s photographic practice throughout his career, both in subject matters and the variety of formats he experimented with, including portraits of his



contemporaries and collaborators that served as source materials for his silkscreen portraiture, stitched photography, photobooth photographs, Polaroids, and more traditional black-and-white prints of nature, nightlife, and events Warhol occasioned—Warhol as an artist-photographer and as a documentarian of the world around him. Juxtaposed with his silkscreen paintings such as *Flowers* (1964) and a series of portraits, also on view are rarely exhibited equipment used by Warhol, such as Polaroid Big Shot cameras, an overhead projector used for hand painted Pop canvases, a 16 mm film camera, acetate studies, and original source material.

Warhol's experimental films from the 1960s, after his Pop career took off, are presented in "Cinema as Object," rooted in his Silver Factory studio that gave rise to the Superstars who starred in his films. Typically shown in isolated theater settings, the works on film in this section are liberated here to be viewed in an open pavilion area in the exhibition hall. Over 24 newly remastered works on view include rare Screen Tests, the iconic film *Empire* (1964), infrequently screened 16 mm works, and television productions from the 1980s. These artistic experiments were often supported by Warhol's commercially successful paintings and editions of iconic brands, revisited here in "Warhol Remixed." Warhol's legacy as a business artist, as he remixed images and brands in his previous work with the culture of 1980s New York, highlight the artist's deft understanding of commercial imagery in a suite of now-iconic works such as Campbell's, Brillo soap pads, and Coca-Cola, as well as updated versions of his Marilyn Monroe screen prints. The evolution from the gestural, hand-painted nature of the 1960s to the slick flatness emblematic of American visual style in the 1980s tracks the innovative techniques and stylistic twists Warhol adopted for the changing trends and norms in America, as well as his own artistic development.

Lastly, "The Immaterial" explores Warhol's confrontation with the spiritual and his turn towards abstraction and conceptual art towards the end of his life, in series such as *Camouflage* (1986) and *Rorschach ink blots* (1984). This section also includes Warhol's self-portraits from the late 1970s and the *Myths* series (1981) in the early 1980s that would elevate the artist as an American myth and Pop saint he became after his unexpected passing in 1987.

The exhibition refreshes the particular relevance of Warhol's connection to contemporary pop culture, communication, and youth culture in his ravenous,



generative approach to a wide range of media—fine art, commercial illustration, experimental filmmaking, masterful appropriation. It highlights the central role he played in shaping culture through the integration of art and urban life, and his observant engagements with nightlife, Hollywood, fashion, and music during America's postwar period of economic growth and societal progress. "Becoming Andy Warhol" positions the artist as an exemplar of self-invention and the American dream, taking on a new endurance in a world that continues to arch towards his influences and legacy.

Transporting Warhol's influence into the present, the Pop Factory section of the exhibition pays homage to the spirit of Warhol's Factory as both the artist's studio and a meeting place for gathering among friends. Outfitted with a replica of the ironic red couch that was a staple at Warhol's Factory, this Pop Factory is a space for visitors to experience the artistic bustle of Warhol's Factory hands-on, where visitors can pose on the red couch as the Superstars had done, as well as create their own silkscreen artwork with a special edition heat press kit produced in collaboration with MIYA, available at UCCA Store.

About the Artist

Andy Warhol was born Andrew Warhola on August 6, 1928, in a two-room apartment at 73 Orr Street in a working-class neighborhood in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He attended Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) from 1945 to 1949, and began his career in New York City as a commercial illustrator. From the 1940s to his death in 1987, Warhol was a prolific artist and entrepreneur. He was a painter, sculptor, illustrator, photographer, and experimented with new media—publishing, film, music production, television, fashion, theater—throughout his career.

About The Andy Warhol Museum

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



Exhibition Catalogue

In conjunction with the exhibition, UCCA will release a bilingual catalogue that features images of the hundreds of artworks and archival objects in the show alongside extensive annotations. These are accompanied by three major essays: exhibition curator José Carlos Diaz discusses the idea of becoming with a series of anecdotes surrounding the artist's birthdays; Blake Gopnik, whose exhaustive biography of Warhol was published in 2020, explores the Pop icon's often overlooked background in classical and modern art; and art critic Zhou Wanqing probes the enduring resonance of the pursuit of newness in the twenty-first century. The catalogue is designed by Hubert & Fischer and published by Zhejiang Photographic Press.

Sponsorship and Support

The exhibition is proudly presented by Cadillac. UCCA thanks executive sponsor CHANEL, as well as presenting sponsors Morgan Stanley and Sotheby's for their generous support for this exhibition. Dulux contributed exclusive wall solutions support. UCCA also thanks the members of its Foundation Council, International Circle, and Young Associates, as well as Lead Partner Aranya, Presenting Partner Bloomberg, and Supporting Partners Active House, Barco, BenQ, Clivet, Dulux, and Genelec.

About Cadillac

Marking Cadillac's 118 years of "art and science" design philosophy and the influence of Cadillac vehicles as a subject of Andy Warhol's pioneering Pop artworks, Cadillac's support for the exhibition "Becoming Andy Warhol" is a tribute from the car brand to art and its legacy, with a spotlight appearance by the featured model in Cadillac's luxury rear-wheel drive sedan family—the new American sedan CT5.

About CHANEL

CHANEL's support of the exhibition "Becoming Andy Warhol" at UCCA Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing, aligning with the 100th anniversary of N°5, extends the House's legacy of cultural engagement by bringing new audiences to the work of a visionary artist who recognized N°5 as a powerful icon of celebrity and luxury worldwide.



尤伦斯当代艺术中心
Center for Contemporary Art

About UCCA

UCCA Center for Contemporary Art is China's leading contemporary art institution. Committed to the belief that art can deepen lives and transcend boundaries, UCCA presents a wide range of exhibitions, public programs, and research initiatives to a public of more than one million visitors each year across three locations. UCCA Beijing sits at the heart of the 798 Art District, occupying 10,000 square meters of factory chambers built in 1957 and regenerated in 2019 by OMA. UCCA Dune, designed by Open Architecture, lies beneath the sand in the seaside enclave of Aranya in Beidaihe. UCCA Edge, designed by New York-based architecture firm SO – IL, opened in Shanghai in May 2021. Formally accredited as a museum by the Beijing Cultural Bureau in 2018, UCCA also operates non-profit foundations, licensed by the Beijing Bureau of Civil Affairs and the Hong Kong government. UCCA's commercial ventures include the retail platform UCCA Store, the children's education initiative UCCA Kids, and collaborations and projects under the rubric UCCA Lab. Opened in 2007 and revived by a committed group of Chinese and international patrons in 2017, UCCA works to bring China into global dialogue through contemporary art.

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