

PRESS RELEASE

Beaumont Street
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12 November 2015, for immediate release:

ASHMOLEAN TO DISPLAY OVER 100 UNSEEN WARHOLS IN SPRING EXHIBITION

ANDY WARHOL WORKS FROM THE HALL COLLECTION

4 February–15 May 2016



Self-portrait, 1967

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For its 2016 spring exhibition, the Ashmolean, in collaboration with the Hall Art Foundation (USA), will present an important private collection of works by Andy Warhol (1928–87). Over 100 paintings, sculptures, screen prints and drawings from the Hall Collection will be exhibited alongside loans of the artist's films from The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh.

Cultural icon, celebrity and provocateur, Warhol produced images that are instantly recognizable. This exhibition shows the artist's work through the lens of a private collection. Among the works featured are a series of screen prints of Joseph Beuys, based on a Polaroid photograph taken by Warhol in 1979 when the two giants of postwar art came face-to-face for the first time.

Curated by Sir Norman Rosenthal, the exhibition spans Warhol's entire career, from iconic works of the '60s to the experimental creations of his last decade. It is arranged chronologically, opening with the early Pop masterpieces and portraits. The first room includes works from key series such as *Flowers* and *Brillo Soap Pads Box*; a group of artists' portraits which features *Roy Lichtenstein*, *James Rosenquist* and *Frank Stella*; as well as some of Warhol's earliest experiments in screen print portraits with pictures of patrons, friends and celebrities (*Troy*, *Patty Oldenburg*, *Ethel Scull*, *Jackie*). Films of the early '60s, including *Sleep* (1963) and *Empire* (1964) and a selection of Warhol's *Screen Tests*, illustrate how the artist engaged with the moving image. This brings us to the point, in 1968, when Warhol was shot and seriously wounded by the feminist activist Valerie Solanas.

The main room of the exhibition is dominated by a spectacular display of Warhol's commissioned portraits spanning the 1970s right up to the year before his death. The group features performers, socialites and politicians including the singer and songwriter, Paul Anka; American celebrities, Maria Shriver and Pia Zadora; the Princess of Iran; and the West German Chancellor, Willy Brandt. The room also includes works (*Hammer and Sickle*, *Mao*, *Dollar Sign*, *Crosses*) that offer typically ambiguous and non-committal social and political commentary; and it features a sequence of pencil portraits from

the 1980s based, like the prints and paintings, on photographs of figures such as Ingrid Bergman and Jane Fonda. The gallery closes with Warhol's response to the challenge of abstraction with *Rorschach*, *Shadows* and *Oxidation Paintings*.

The exhibition's final room concentrates on the productive last years of Warhol's life. In the *Positive/Negative* series, Warhol revisited the subject matter of his earliest Pop works - advertising, newspaper headlines and commercial packaging - and explored new territory in overtly political and religious works such as *Map of the Eastern U.S.S.R. Missile Bases* and *Detail of the Last Supper*. Another departure was Warhol's use of simple slogans including *Stress!*, *Art* and one of his last works, the uncannily prescient *Heaven and Hell are Just One Breath Away*.

Dr Alexander Sturgis, Director of the Ashmolean, says: 'We are hugely grateful to the Hall Art Foundation and to Andy and Christine Hall for making this exhibition possible with the generous loan of their superb collection. The substance and significance of Andy Warhol's art becomes more evident with each passing decade and this exhibition aims to add to what we know about Warhol by highlighting unfamiliar and surprising works from across his career.'

Sir Norman Rosenthal, The Hall Art Foundation Curator of Contemporary Art at the Ashmolean, says: 'Evermore, Warhol feels like the decisive artist of his generation who peered into the future and saw his world with all its glamour and with all its horror. The Hall's collection of Warhols demonstrates the artist's extraordinarily diverse output, as he reacts to his world with penetrating truthfulness and wit.'

Exhibition: ANDY WARHOL: WORKS FROM THE HALL COLLECTION
Dates: 4 February–15 May 2016
Venue: The John Sainsbury Exhibition Galleries
Press View: Wednesday 3 February 2016
Publication: The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue with essays by Sir Norman Rosenthal, Eric Shiner, Director of The Andy Warhol Museum, and an interview with Andrew Hall by Alexander Sturgis.
Tickets: £10/£9 concession available at www.ashmolean.org/exhibitions

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■ NOTES TO EDITORS

ANDY WARHOL: WORKS FROM THE HALL COLLECTION is organized by the Hall Art Foundation in collaboration with the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. The exhibition is the fourth in the partnership series between the Foundation and the Museum, and the first to be held in the John Sainsbury Exhibition Galleries. Previous exhibitions in the series include MALCOLM MORLEY AT THE ASHMOLEAN: PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS FROM THE HALL COLLECTION (Oct 2013–Mar 2014); JOSEPH BEUYS AND JÖRG IMMENDORFF: ART BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE! (Apr 2014–Jan 2015); and ED PASCHKE: VISIONARY FROM CHICAGO (Jan–Jul 2015).

HALL

ART FOUNDATION

The Hall Art Foundation was founded in 2007 and makes available postwar and contemporary art works from its own collection and that of Andrew and Christine Hall for the enjoyment and education of the public. In 2012, the Foundation opened an exhibition space on a former dairy farm in the American village of Reading, Vermont. The Foundation has also formed an exhibition partnership with the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, in North Adams, Massachusetts to present monumental outdoor sculpture, in addition to a long-term installation of sculpture and paintings by Anselm Kiefer. The Foundation also collaborates with other public institutions around the world to facilitate loans from its own collection and that of the Halls. Together, the collections comprise some 5,000 works by several hundred artists including Richard Artschwager, Georg Baselitz, Joseph Beuys, Eric Fischl, Leon Golub, Jörg Immendorff, Anselm Kiefer, Barry Le Va, Malcolm Morley, A. R. Penck, Ed Ruscha, Andy Warhol and Franz West.

The Ashmolean Museum

Founded in 1683, the Ashmolean Museum is the most significant museum of art and archaeology in the heart of Britain and the finest university museum in the world. Its collections are large, rich and unusually diverse, ranging from archaeology to fine and decorative arts, and from numismatics to casts of classical sculpture from the great museums of Europe. The Ashmolean is home to the best collection of Predynastic Egyptian material in Europe; the only great collection of Minoan antiquities outside Greece; the largest and most important group of Raphael drawings in the world; the greatest Anglo-Saxon collections outside the British Museum; a world-renowned collection of coins and medals; and outstanding holdings of Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Islamic art. The works and objects in these remarkable collections tell the story of civilisation and the aspirations of mankind from Nineveh and ancient Egypt, to the Renaissance, right up to the triumphs of twentieth century Europe. Admission to the Museum is free.

Open: Tuesday–Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 10am–5pm
Closed: Mondays, 24, 25 and 26 December

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