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National

One hundred late Warhols on show for the first time

Maev Kennedy

More than 100 works made by Andy Warhol in the last years of his life, and never before exhibited, will be among the stars of next year's exhibitions at the Ashmolean museum in Oxford - along with a "flatpack" Byzantine church that is being put together 1,500 years after the ship carrying it sank off Sicily.

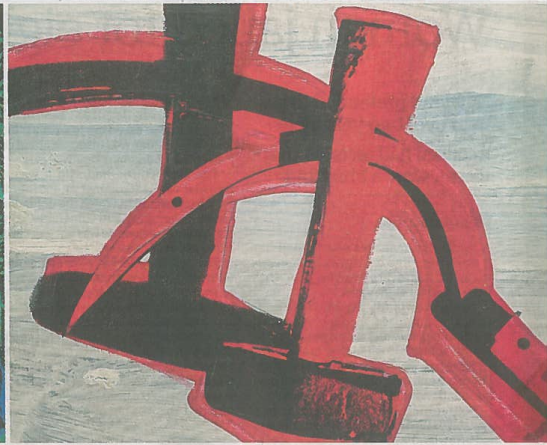
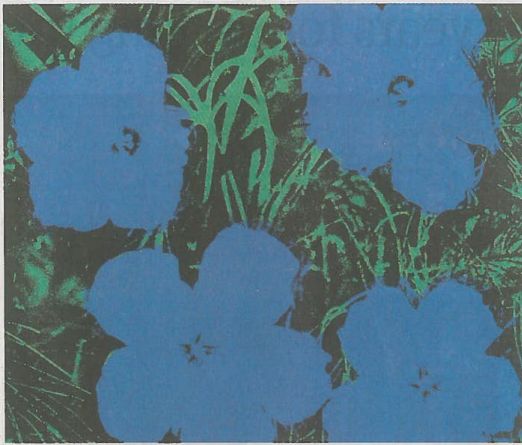
The Warhols, on loan from a private collection, include his screenprint portraits of fellow artist Joseph Beuys, made after the two giants of postwar art finally met in 1979 - and got on very well.

"They were the two artists who were more than artists - they became symbols of their age," said Sir Norman Rosenthal, former head of exhibitions at the Royal Academy, who is curating the show.

Xa Sturgis, who took over last year as director of the Ashmolean, said the 3,000 years covered by the 2016 programme showed the breadth and scale of the museum, which was founded in 1683 and is regarded as one of the greatest university museums in the world.

The Warhols usually hang in the US home of Christine and Andrew Hall, the latter an Oxford graduate who became a multimillionaire businessman. The Halls love Warhol, and their loans range from early work to his last before his death in 1987 - a screenprint titled Heaven and hell are just one breath away!

Sturgis said the Halls were also col-



Details from *Flowers*, 1978; *Hammer and Sickle*, 1976; and *Maria Shriver*, 1986; and below, *Twenty Fuchsia Maos*, 1979 - all among works by Andy Warhol that will be on display at



Farah Ashraf Pahlavi, 1977

lectors of Beuys, and had spotted the resonance between the German and American artists - though one was so political and anti-American, while the other was so apparently ephemeral, non-committal and such a champion of his homeland.

The Warhol show, running from 4 February to 15 May 2016, will be followed in June by an archaeology show called *Storms, Wars and Shipwrecks*, consisting of objects recovered from the seas around Sicily, from everyday jars once filled with olive oil and wine to magnificent sculptures. The star will be what Paul Roberts, keeper of the antiquities department, describes as "a flatpack

Ikea church", one of those shipped from Constantinople in the 5th century by Emperor Justinian to stamp his authority and brand of Christianity on the western Mediterranean. Like many of Justinian's heavily laden *naves lapidariae* (stone ships) it never reached its destination, sinking off the Sicilian coast where the wreck was relocated in the 1960s.

Divers brought up hundreds of pieces including 28 columns of white Turkish marble, with more recovered in the last decade, but they were placed in store because there has never been enough money to display them.

Curator Alexandra Sofroniew said she hoped that as a result of the Ashmolean





the Ashmolean in Oxford Photographs: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Inc



exposure, a permanent museum might be built in the fishing village near the wreck. The exhibition will also cover the career of Honoria Frost, who trained as an artist but became fascinated by archaeology and taught herself to dive in a well at her home in Wimbledon. Frost, who died aged 93 in 2010, brought academic discipline to maritime archaeology. In 1971 she directed work at a Carthaginian wreck off Sicily, and objects she recovered will be on show.

Many of the pieces are encrusted with barnacles. "You get not just the beautiful objects but their context," said Roberts. "There's something magical about bringing them back into the light of day."



Self-portrait, 1967