

off the wall gallery

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ANDY WARHOL

The name **Andy Warhol** is synonymous with Pop Art. The most important and influential artist of the past half-century, Warhol maintained a level of creativity already legendary before his untimely death in 1987. Starting as a technically innovative commercial artist in New York advertising, in the early 1960s, Warhol began adapting the commercial process of silkscreening to the world of fine art and created iconic masterpieces from the likenesses of such as Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, and Jackie Kennedy.

Warhol took ideas and images directly from the mass media, from the 1960s cultural revolution, television, movies, advertising, and photojournalism. Painter, graphic artist, manager of a rock band and filmmaker, Warhol had a huge influence on subsequent generations of artists. His original and graphic works are found in major museums worldwide, and today are more widely sought-after than ever before.

An iconic figure in twentieth-century art and culture, Andy Warhol was born Andrew Warhola, the son of working-class immigrants from Slovakia. He studied commercial art in Pittsburgh before moving to New York in 1949 and beginning a highly successful career as an advertising illustrator. A decade later, Warhol started making paintings (at first handmade, later silkscreened) of images lifted directly from the mass media. His range included consumer products (Campbell's soup cans) and movie stars (Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley), as well as darker aspects of American culture, including race riots, car crashes, and the electric chair. Warhol's famously flat, monotone persona mirrored Warhol's inexpressive painting style. An obsession with Hollywood glamour inspired a series of experimental films, often campy in tone and explicitly homoerotic.

Warhol's Factory — a term for both his studio and the associated network of actors, musicians, druggies, and hangers-on — has become synonymous with 1960s bohemia. Although his work was initially controversial for its apparent non-art status, he quickly achieved critical and commercial success. In the 1970s and 1980s, Warhol's celebrity arguably eclipsed his art, although he produced several innovative bodies of work during this period. He died in 1987 from complications following routine gallbladder surgery.

For a more in-depth look at Andy Warhol's personal and artistic life, please visit [Wikipedia](#)