



The Cleveland Museum of Art

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MAJOR ANDY WARHOL PAINTING ADDED TO CMA'S PERMANENT COLLECTION

(Cleveland, OH) Director Robert P. Bergman announced today the acquisition of a landmark work in the history of twentieth-century art: Andy Warhol's *Marilyn x 100*. The picture is monumental in scale, measuring more than 18 feet in width by almost 7 feet high. It is one of the largest of Warhol's renderings of Marilyn Monroe and among the largest of all of his vintage works. Warhol created the canvas, consisting of 100 close-up portraits of the movie star, after her death in 1962. *Marilyn x 100* goes on view Friday in CMA's modern galleries.

"The Cleveland Museum of Art has for some time sought to acquire a masterpiece of Pop Art," Bergman commented. "This is it: Warhol's monumental summation of the essence of his art, and of essential aspects of our times and our society. It is a privilege for us to give this important work a permanent home where the public can experience it. Indeed, it's a thrill to have this seminal work at the Cleveland Museum of Art whose collection is known for works of this stellar quality. The painting will have an enormous impact in our presentation of 20th-century art. I hope this acquisition will bring pride and enjoyment to the community, and broaden its understanding of the art of recent times. I have little doubt that it will stimulate conversation. We owe thanks to our trustees for their progressive vision and bold action."

Andy Warhol is one of the dominant figures in post-World War II American art. His vintage works from the 1960s are seen today as iconic visual expressions of that complex and turbulent time in American history, and they rank among the century's most influential and powerful works of art. Originally considered radical and revolutionary, Warhol's classic works—along with those of his relative contemporaries, Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, and Robert Rauschenburg—are now thought of as essential components of the canon of twentieth century art. They changed the course of the history of art and they continue today to influence contemporary art making.

Warhol based his works depicting Marilyn Monroe on a glossy black-and-white photo of the star, taken by Gene Korman, used as a publicity still for the 1953 film *Niagara*. Warhol

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acquired the photo soon after Monroe's death in August 1962, and marked it for close cropping around her face and hair. The signature compositional approach used in *Marilyn x 100*—a grid of repeated images—had been utilized shortly before this in his famous *200 Campbell Soup Cans*.

Says Tom Hinson, CMA's curator of contemporary art and photography: "Marilyn Monroe was perhaps Warhol's favorite subject among the celebrity images. Her poignant combination of classic American beauty, Hollywood fabrication, vulnerable youth, sex symbol, and tragic victim made her glamorous face a particularly rich vehicle for metaphor and meaning. The acquisition of this painting culminates years of effort. It's a great moment for the museum."

In *Marilyn x 100*, a ground color of light gray was first applied over the entire canvas. Next, over half the canvas was painted with a background hue of intense oranges. Then colors were applied by hand to accentuate facial features: a yellow area for the hair, blue for the eye shadow, red for the lips, flesh tone for the face, and green for the collar. The final step in the process was to silk-screen the photographic image in black over the entire canvas creating a range of different Marilyns. These fifty colored images are juxtaposed with fifty screened in black over a field of light gray, unpainted and repetitive. These hundred Marilyns relate to another fundamental aspect of Warhol's classic work—the use of serial images. In this case the faces are apparently the same, but in fact they are quite different.

Born Andrew Warhola in 1928 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Warhol was trained as a commercial artist at Carnegie-Mellon University (then Carnegie Institute of Technology), and came of age during the height of Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s. He was among a number of New York artists collectively known as Pop artists, including Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, and James Rosenquist, who in the late 1950s and early '60s championed in their art the imagery of popular culture, in which emotions and ideas were greatly condensed and presented in an impersonal manner. They sought to use their training to transform images from ads, comic books, billboards, movies, and television.

Marilyn x 100 was acquired from the artist in 1984 by the famed English collector, Charles Saatchi. The museum sought and acquired the work from the subsequent and second owner, a private owner who prefers to remain anonymous, who purchased it at auction at Sotheby's in 1992.

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Slides, transparencies, and black-and-whites are available. **Information for cutlines:** The Cleveland Museum of Art just acquired *Marilyn x 100*, by Andy Warhol (American, 1928-1987). This monumental canvas, one of the largest of Warhol's serial images of the Hollywood idol, measures 6 ft. 9 in. by 18 ft. 7-1/2 in. (2.057 x 5.677 meters). It was made using silk-screen ink and synthetic polymer paint on canvas.

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