

In the months following Andy Warhol's shocking and untimely death on February 22, 1987 at age 58, Fred Hughes, Andy's close friend and business manager, and I had the daunting job of inventorying all of Andy's work. With Fred, as executor, taking the lead in this long process, we hired a team at Andy's last studio at 22 East 33rd Street to help us catalogue paintings, drawings, limited edition prints, photography, sculpture, film and video.

It was during this time that I rediscovered my appreciation for Andy's early drawings from the 1950s. In 1971, the Gotham Book Mart on West 47th Street in Manhattan had staged an exhibition of Andy's drawings, which he reluctantly attended after much prodding from Fred and Jed Johnson, Andy's boyfriend at the time. I went with Andy and the others to the show that night. The exhibition was a wonderful collection of 1950s drawings, including gold leaf, blotted line and ink wash drawings with subjects as diverse as shoes, flowers, cherubs and boys. It was a comprehensive introduction to Andy's early drawings.

Andy was reluctant to go to the show because he always wanted to stay in the present, be the person he was at that moment and, more than anything, always keep moving forward. That desire was probably the motivation for him stashing the drawings in flat files and hiding from view a trove dating as early as 1949. Fortunately, he never destroyed or threw out any of them.

The provocative German artist George Grosz was working in Pittsburgh when Andy was in college and Grosz's drawings certainly influenced Andy. In 1946, while attending Carnegie Institute of Technology, Andy made drawings depicting his brother and others selling fruit and vegetables from the back of a truck. These works in particular have the feel of Grosz. In 1949, Andy entered a painting entitled *The Broad Gave Me My Face, But I Can Pick My Own Nose* to the annual exhibition of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh. The exhibition jury summarily rejected it, except for one member, George Grosz, who admired and defended it. Andy must have been aware of Grosz's work for books and magazines; something he would take up on his arrival in New York in 1949. The style of American artist Ben Shahn also made an impression on Andy's early 1950s drawings, as did the Swiss German artist Paul Klee.

As I studied these drawings, I could see a young and talented Andy finding his own voice through an evolution of technique. He experimented with different techniques, making "broken line" and stippled pieces using graphite pencils to make portraits of people. He would use several sheets of paper to make one drawing by Scotch-taping them together. He also was adept at lifting his pencil off the paper in the midst of creating a portrait, allowing the viewer's eye to complete the image. In the 1950s, in his work as a commercial artist for Glamour and other fashion magazines, Andy began to use the blotted line technique, a form of printmaking he mastered. He could make a very fine blotted line to a very thick, almost unruly blotted line, an aesthetic that caught the attention of many art directors. I. Miller Shoes hired him to depict their designs in a 1955 advertising campaign.

Andy used source material culled from magazines like LIFE and photographs taken by his friend Ed Wallowitch for his commercial commissions. Wallowitch continued his collaboration with Andy into the 1960s, taking photographs of Campbell Soup cans for the now-famous paintings and drawings. He became an extremely successful commercial artist in the 1950s and won a number of Art Directors Club Awards for Distinctive Merit and, more importantly, the Art Directors Club Medal, the group's highest honor.

At the same time, Andy was also creating fine art. He focused mostly on portraits of men using a ballpoint pen or pen and ink. He also did portraits of feet with objects and decor and fanciful drawings of decorated penises. As I looked through sketchbook after sketchbook, I was astounded by what a wonderful draftsman Andy had become. The simplicity of line when drawing a face or body was not unlike Henri Matisse — pure beauty captured by just a few spare lines in graphite or ink.

He also did drawings of children and various animals, most notably cats. The output in the 1950s was extraordinary; the drawings imaginative, whimsical, and provocative, as in the blotted line image of two men about to kiss. Andy created markedly fewer drawings in the 1960s but the works are strong, powerful and iconic like the Campbell Soup cans, Coca-Cola bottles, 10 dollar bills, perfume bottles, and a series of portraits of female movie stars to name a few. During the early 60s, Andy was still experimenting with line, using both cross-hatching and broad, soft, expressionistic strokes with graphite pencils.

In 1972, Andy incorporated his line drawings — squiggles and outlines — into his silkscreens in works like the Mao series and to a lesser extent his Vote McGovern (Nixon) prints. By this time Andy had been using the silkscreen process for about ten years but his drawing output started to increase again. As part of the Mao series, Andy made multiple drawings using a soft graphite pencil that was almost like a carpenter's pencil. In 1974, he made drawings of Japanese flower arrangements, Ikebana, and had them assembled into a portfolio of silkscreens entitled *Hand Colored Flowers*. Through the 1970s and 80s, Andy used his drawings in various print editions as well as his paintings. The quality of the paper became consistently higher. In 1975, he made drawings for his Hammer & Sickles, Skulls, Mick Jagger, and Ladies & Gentleman (Drag Queen) series.

I watched him draw as we would talk about business. I was Vice President of Andy Warhol Enterprises, Inc. and Executive Studio Manager as well as a producer of the video projects and cable TV shows we collaborated on. Over the years, Andy commented in interviews that he had shaky hands and could not draw, but that was never evident as I watched his sure and steady hand commit line to paper without hesitation. In the 1970s and 80s, Andy used an overhead projector to make drawings with graphite that some people thought was charcoal. He also created drawings with black acrylic paint. He would have silkscreens made of graphite drawings and acrylic paintings to be screened onto the painted canvas which added depth and created the shadow effect apparent in works like the Absolut Vodka painting series made in 1985-86.

From the 1950s until he died, Andy remained remarkably creative and innovative. For a man who declared he wanted to be a machine or a robot, he was a singularly sensitive and accomplished draftsman. Because of the New York Academy of Art's focus on drawing as a foundation for all types of artmaking, he was genuinely enthusiastic to be one its earliest supporters along with his friend Stuart Pivar, one of the school's founders. I remember him encouraging artists like Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring and Kenny Scharf to study drawing. He took Kenny and Keith to the Academy so they could discover firsthand what was being taught at the school.

This exhibition offers a glimpse into Andy's immense body of drawing work. I hope it will encourage artists and viewers to value the practice of drawing as much as he did.

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