ANDY WARHOL

VELVET RAGE AND BEAUTY

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CONVERSATIONS

WITH
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A CONVERSATION WITH

BLAKE GOPNIK

April 2023

Klaus Biesenbach
The idea for "Andy Warhol: Velvet Rage and Beauty" is to do a show that's more about the hidden Warhol—the gay, the queer, the fluid, the trans Warhol.

Blake Gopnik
His homosexuality—what that means, the different versions of it is central to my book. In Pittsburgh homosexuality was different than in New York; in New York, the Uptown scene was different than Downtown. The change in the status of homosexuality over the course of the sixties and seventies was hugely important to the reading of Warhol in my book. I can't think of anything more important for understanding Warhol except maybe his art school education.

KB
In a certain way, I'm thinking about it autobiographically—because in the end, my being different informed a lot of my own life decisions: Where do I live? What do I do?

BG
Even in your generation? Or in *our* generation? I think we're about the same age.

KB
Yeah. I remember when I first started doing KW[1] in Berlin, it was still illegal to be gay. The same paragraph 175[2] that put gay people into the concentration camps was still on the lawbooks. Being gay was still punishable.

BG
It was in England, too. And in 1950 in Pennsylvania, where Warhol was from, you could go to jail pretty much for life.

KB
I remember I talked to a pal of mine—we were around the same age. I was doing the art space and he was in politics. And I said, "Do you want to be the head of the Culture Department, commissioner or senator at some point?" And he said, "No, I can't, I'm gay."
But then in 2001, the day before, the election of Berlin's mayor, another politician, said, "I'm gay, and that's a good thing." And he got elected. That was a watershed moment. But until then, I always considered that aspect of my own life hugely problematic, almost central. And also—I didn't even assume this; I just never questioned it—I always thought that this aspect was problematic for Warhol.

BG
I can't think of anything that's more central. If you look at what it was like to be gay in 1949 in Pittsburgh, it was terrifying and dangerous. And yet Warhol was really flamboyant; he was more flamboyant then, probably, than ever again in his whole life. There was no mistaking that he was gay. He wore a pink suit!

KB
What do you think changed in him during his years in New York?

BG
That's a good question. I think Warhol was a very traditional avant-garde artist; he always wanted to adopt an avant-garde position. In Pittsburgh in 1949, being gay and out was, socially, as avant-garde as you could get. And his art related to that, even then. In 1950 in New York, there was enough gay culture that it was no longer as exciting just to proclaim your homosexuality, at least within cultured circles. And there were also established ways to claim a gay identity. He could inhabit the way others were already doing that, at least among the Uptown gays in New York. And I think that left his avant-gardism to display itself in other ways, and especially in the Pop art he went on to produce in the 1960s.
Although people do act as though he didn't have art exhibitions in the 1950s, and he absolutely did! He had solo shows—it's just that they were so explicitly homoerotic by the standards of the fifties that they were a dismal failure, at least in terms of building his career as an artist.
He showed in a gallery that specialized in gay art for the gay community. He did get reviews, but they were always written in coded language: "There's a problem here." "These are too much like Jean Cocteau." There were a whole bunch of



JEAN COCTEAU illustration for Jean Genet's novel Querelle de Brest, 1948

different ways to signal the "problem" of Warhol's homosexuality, and to dismiss him because of it.

KB
But do you think it is an important thread through his work?

BG
One of the things that I say—that everyone says—is that Warhol's persona was as important a creation of his as any object he made. And that persona was necessarily wrapped up in his sexuality. So to the extent that he wanted an avant-garde persona, it was going to be tied to that. I think he's more subtle at some times than at others; I mean, the Factory persona is the least obviously gay persona. It's not a straight persona, but it's more subtly queer than at other times.

KB
I grew up in a context with no art, no intellectual scene—pretty grassroots, even for Germany.

BG
Where was that?

KB
Near Cologne. But in the world I grew up in, there was no Liberace, because he was a continent away. But we did have pop singers in Germany that now, looking back, were super gay, but nobody thought they were gay. They were just artists.

BG
When I was young, many older women in the United States loved Liberace, but might barely know what homosexuality was.

One of those Liberace fans would have said something like, "I don't talk about that kind of thing." I think they might have used language like "He was a fairy," without that really meaning anything in terms of a sex act. Being a fairy was seen as a cultural position, I think, more than a sexual orientation. In a way I think there was a concept of queerness that didn't overlap with homosexuality. Liberace's female fans would have thought of him as queer to the culture—as at an angle to mainstream culture—without wanting to even think about him sleeping with other men. That might have been true of Warhol's own mother, when she saw her Andy with his boyfriends, in the house she shared with them.

KB
I do remember that when I was in my early curator years, people talked about Warhol as if he were asexual. Which is very funny—there's this hypersexual body of work, in the *Sex Parts*, for example, and in so many of his films, and then you describe him as asexual!

BG
I have a Google alert for Warhol, and I would say that once a week someone writes about "Warhol the famously asexual artist," even though there's plenty of evidence that he was very sexual—I mean physically sexual. And yet people don't want that to be true.

KB
Why is that?

BG
I think because, in the mainstream art world even today, people prefer him to be gay but asexual rather than actually sleeping with men and engaging in gay sex acts. I think they still want to neutralize him—or to neuter him.

KB
The "sexual work" is barely ever in the auctions or big shows. It's relatively hidden, no?

BG
Well, remember, he showed almost none of it in his life. You must have seen the Whitney show?[3] Remember, there was one very narrow wall that you had to sort of walk around to see the explicit images. The fact that he never showed them gives people today an excuse not to show them.

I don't know what gets shown in Europe, but in the United States, you'd have to put up a sign saying "Danger, danger, danger!"

Do you know about the movie called Three (1964) where Gerard Malanga—it's Gerard, Ondine, and another man—are having sex in the Factory toilet, anal sex on camera? I don't know if that's ever been shown.

KB
So why do you think Warhol never showed these pieces?

BG
Maybe he showed *Three* in the Factory to friends. You know, it would have been illegal to show it. It would have been confiscated instantly if he'd shown it in public. So why would he do that?

But that's true of the vast majority of the sixties films: They weren't ever shown or circulated, including many of the *Screen Tests*. A few selections were screened in public, but certainly not all of them.

KB
It's kind of strange how we are going backwards into that era where you're not allowed to show things anymore, right?

BG
Or that we change texts that already exist, to make them less "offensive" to our current tastes.

I find that just shocking. It's like when the Victorians added happy endings to Shakespearean plays.

KB
When Warhol made his explicit works, it would have been illegal to show them. Then we had twenty years where it was legal to show them, and now that door is closing again.

BG
Well, it's strange, because obviously homosexual culture is completely accepted. I could be wrong, but I think it's probably easier to show gay sex than straight sex now. With straight sex there are issues of …

KB
Exploitation?

BG
Yes, exploitation, and patriarchy, whereas gay sex is a celebration of an alternative culture and an alternative sexuality. At least that's true on the Left. The Right would be happy to rule out all images of any kind of sex. There are some things that are at risk of censorship on both the Left and Right, but I think gay imagery's only at risk from the Right.

KB
Then there was a significant part of Warhol's artistic practice that he did not practice in the open because he couldn't. I wonder if, historically, that's actually the case, for a lot of artists.

BG
There was an underground circulation of gay imagery by artists that Warhol liked—Demuth, Cocteau—that couldn't circulate in public.

KB
I was thinking about the recent discussion of Michelangelo's *David*, and of the American teacher who got in trouble for showing an image of it. And, of course, the private parts are just a detail in that sculpture. Michelangelo was not obsessed with those details and didn't enlarge or focus on the penis, the way Warhol does in some works. So it's not a direct comparison, but the comparison does fit when you say "What can you show publicly?"

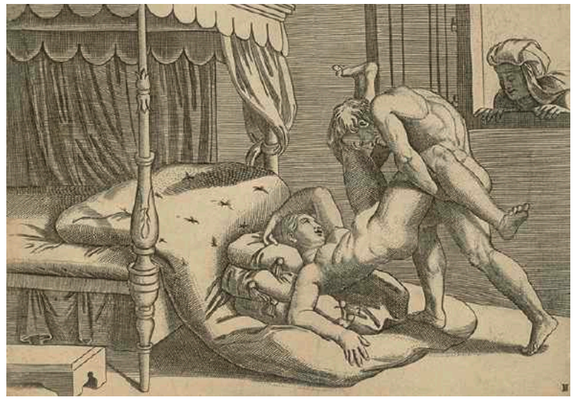
If I think about Botticelli—or jumping to ballet—I think both Botticelli's *Venus* and the ballet as an art form were ways to preempt and anticipate something like the idea of pornography centuries ago, by giving a person the chance to look at a beautiful body for hours. Because if you think about it, in 1810, you could go to a ballet and see these beautiful, very visibly sensual bodies. There was no other way, legally, to see such a young, beautiful person, right?

BG
I think there's way more sexuality in the *David* than we might think, now that we've claimed it as an official, safe "masterpiece." Michelangelo was known to be gay at the time. Leonardo was known to be gay. I think the penis in the *David* was clearly sexual—and you know, it was draped at various times, and there were always issues around revealing a penis, and also a vagina, of course. I mean, Titian's *Venus of Urbino*[4] was seen as an image of a woman masturbating—it was read as that, at least sometimes.

KB
Do you think Michelangelo and da Vinci had sexually explicit works like Warhol had?

BG
There's a famous angel by da Vinci with an erect penis. But of course, everyone claims it can't be by Leonardo. I can't weigh in on that.

But there was pornography in his day. There's this great series of engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi of sex positions, called *I Modi*.[5] And the art historian Alexander Nagel has written interesting things about how important those are in the creation of our modern category of art. He sees Raimondi's *I Modi* as being fundamental to a category of works that float free of previous functional models—meaning that pornography is there at the birth of Western concepts of art.



UNKNOWN ARTIST, A Couple Engaged in Loveplay, 16th century, copper engraving, 69.8 × 55.5 cm (sheet size)

KB
I suppose pornography is there in Greek and Roman depictions—very much so—but this of course was before religion's holding back, draping, hiding. So at the beginning of a certain culture you have very explicit depictions, and then morality comes in, or manipulation, and then all of a sudden those depictions are not part of the visible world anymore. I remember they were not part of the visible world even thirty years ago. When I hitchhiked to Barcelona, at the Ramblas

they had those big magazine kiosks right on the street. And you could see the gay magazines only up to the head—they would blacken the rest of the magazine. I think there's also a scene in *My Own Private Idaho*[6] by Gus Van Sant, where one of the characters is in a section of a store where they have X-rated magazines, and they were blacked out.

BG
There's always been underground pornography, probably much more than we realize, because it gets destroyed. But I think there's almost always been a black market for pornography. There certainly was in the eighteenth century, and the sixteenth century.

KB
There's also the question of sublimation. I remember in school, in 1970s Germany, it was explained to me that you could create a higher value in culture by not actually *living* certain things, but instead sublimating them into art or music or dance. So you don't live out your vices, but you make something out of your desires, which is high art.

So are Warhol's *Torso* paintings, *Sex Parts*, the sexually explicit Polaroids and photographs—as well as the silk-screens and drawings in that area—are they just for his own personal pleasure, rather than being sublimated into the value of high-art?

BG
I don't think so. I think he conceived of them as fully part of his practice as an artist.

The fifties drawings are really important because some can be pretty explicit, and I assume that those circulated among his friends. We don't really know much about exactly who saw what, but the assumption is that they circulated. Sure, he couldn't show them in a gallery, but they were relatively public. And later, in the 1980s, he was not alone when he made his work—there were men performing for him to take his *Sex Parts* photographs. Meaning that there was plenty of social activity around those images. It's not as though he's taking pictures of himself masturbating.

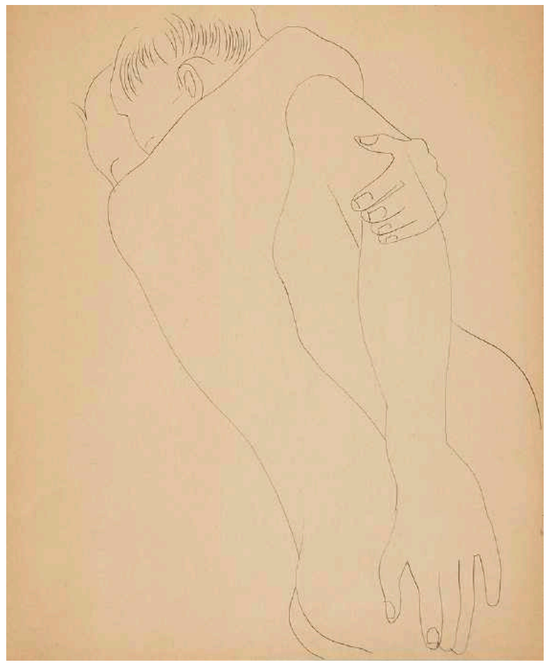
But I don't think he was an out gay in any normal sense. I think he was deeply conflicted about it. Maybe less conflicted than some people, but it wasn't straightforward for him.

KB
I remember when—not too long ago, perhaps ten years ago—I finally read *The Velvet Rage*,[7] which is recommended reading for any gay person. The book describes how conflicted you are if you're in the closet—or if you're coming out, or if you came out a hundred years ago and you think you're completely out—how conflicted you still are because you are disappointing yourself, because you wanted to be somebody else or you wanted to fulfill expectations you projected onto other people or you didn't want to be such a… a creature of shame and sin. If you are not the majority norm, it causes you pain to stand out. It's recommended reading as it allows you to reflect on all those complicated feelings.

BG
When was it written?

KB
The book is nearly twenty years old. It came out 2005. And it's so strange because I came of age in Europe, and then I was already a bit mature when I came to the US. I've been here for about twenty-five years and now I'm fifty-six. I do remember that fifteen years ago it was an awkward moment in "gay life," because there were still people that suffered from having long-term HIV complications like emaciation, and you could see that they had health complications, but you couldn't take PrEP or medication that would completely "take that out of your body." You couldn't marry, you couldn't legally have a surrogate child.

I was often confronted with the idea that being gay and getting old meant being lonely, slowly deteriorating because you had the virus. So there were so many implications that you couldn't be proud to be who you are. So it was really sad. (*laughter*) And then it changed because



ANDY WARHOL, MALE COUPLE, 1950s, blue ballpoint on Manila paper, 42.55 x 35.56 cm

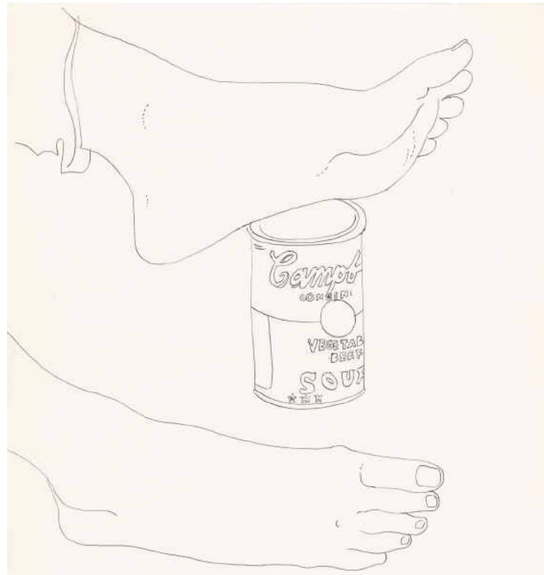
PrEP[8] arrived. Sex was liberated from existential fear. One careless moment did not necessarily mean that you die. Sex changed because it was not necessarily fatal anymore if somebody was HIV positive or negative. Finally it was safer. You could start getting married; you could be a parent and have children. So it completely changed your life. Sometimes you see older movies that age really badly—like when you see old cell phones and you immediately see, "Oh, that was 2007 where they had a flip phone." But they also age badly when the mother says, "Oh, you don't want to grow old and lonely"—because that was absolutely the gay predicament. Because you were not attractive anymore. You would not go to Fire Island[9] and be the center of attention. You would just slowly fade out into oblivion and be lonely or pathetic.

BG
The thing Warhol was most conflicted about was that he did, I think, want traditional love—not necessarily a traditional family, but he badly wanted romance. That was extremely important to him. And it was harder for his generation of gay men to have a stable romantic life. I think he was really looking for that with Jed Johnson, and certainly with Jon Gould. And the letters, the Valentine's Day cards between him and Jon Gould are kind of beautiful and amazing things: They're so traditional, and there's so much love there.

KB
So let's say the Valentine's cards are strictly personal, private; they're not works of art. Then one could argue, "Well, he wanted a romantic life, but he also wanted a sex life. So both the Valentine's cards and the Polaroids are not part of his art." Right?

BG
I mean, with Warhol, it's hard to distinguish the private from the public, the personal from the artistic. I agree with you that the Valentine's Day cards aren't part of his art. I think you could even argue that he was more embarrassed by the romance than he was by the sex. There was something slightly shameful about being romantic, whereas enjoying watching people fist was within the range of what was considered normal in his particular gay culture.

I think one of the really crucial connections—and people have written about this—is between homosexuality and the avant-garde, with their shared notions of standing out from the norm. I think that connection is extremely important for Warhol, because I think that positive, avant-garde aspect of not being like other people is more powerful for him by far than any shame he might feel for not being like other people. There's certainly a positive valence attached to standing out, and that was extremely important to him. So I do think that queerness and artistic avant-gardism were really closely connected for him. And there's a cogent, convincing gay reading of almost all his work—and there was at the time, too. With his *Campbell's Soup Cans*, people at the time talked about their being campy,



which of course connected them to gay culture. You know, one of my favorite drawings in all of Warhol is one of a naked man's foot with a Campbell's soup can next to it, and it's turned so you can only read the word "Camp." Which is just lovely, and shows a self-conscious link between his earliest Pop art and his gay culture.

ANDY WARHOL, FEET WITH CAMPBELL'S SOUP CAN, 1960, Black ballpoint pen on cream wove paper, 43.3 x 35.2 cm

KB
Nice. (*laughter*)

BG
So he knew perfectly well what he was doing.

KB
When you look at some more sexually explicit works, are those works that you consider groundbreaking pieces in contemporary art? For example, you have some of Bruce Nauman's pieces—walking a square, walking upside down, playing the violin.[10] These are obviously works that consider the boundaries of what it means to have an artistic practice. Were there works like this that were more in the explicit area of Warhol's practice where you think, "These are actually the first times ever in that an artist made that, explored that, depicted that"?

BG
Well, Warhol's *Blow Job* is a great example—but the funny thing about it is that the assumption is that it's gay, but of course it could be a woman delivering the blow job. But it's never read as that; it has always been read as gay. Which is probably because Warhol's persona was just gay enough for that to be the obvious reading.

I think his appearance in Philadelphia in 1965—even though there's no explicit sex happening at all—is an early appearance of him as a gay superstar. I mean, he appears in a leather jacket! His persona was closely enough associated with gay practices, with S and M, that I think that's awfully important—or at least, in 1965, he was trying to make that hidden association more explicit than it was a few years earlier. Even though some people wouldn't have read it that way, I think coming out as a gay artist was very important, to Warhol and to the culture—I mean, who else was there? Cocteau, maybe? But Cocteau was more of a Liberace figure, I think—sort of on the edge of coming out. Whereas when Warhol appears in his leather jacket, and Gerard Malanga has the bullwhip on stage, I think that's pretty close to being a revelation.

KB
But if you think about the artworks—are there any objects that are fully out?

BG
Blow Job. I think that would have to be the one.

KB
The Polaroids preparing the *Torso* painting could have also been for the casting of a porn movie. They could pretend to have a function: "Oh, I'm casting for something."

BG
Of course, they weren't shown at the time, so it's hard to know the extent to which they count as a contribution to the culture of that moment.

KB
Did people know about them?

BG
You know, you'd be surprised at how recently any of this discourse about Warhol's sexuality begins to happen, at least in public. I would say the last fifteen, twenty years is when it really starts happening—when shows regularly include sexual imagery. Even when I started writing my Warhol biography ten years ago, it was considered marginally daring of me to reveal all this, as fully as I did.

KB
Do you think it makes sense to focus on that in an exhibition at a major international museum?

BG
Yes, completely! (*laughter*) It's the most important thing about Warhol.

KB
Why is it the most important thing?

BG
Because I think it's fundamental to a huge amount of his art and how we read it and how you should read it, and even to how it was read at the time. If you believe, as I do—as many people do—that his persona is central to his creativity, then his persona is deeply wrapped up in queerness. And his cultural context is deeply queer. You know about the famous 1963 *ARTnews* interview with Warhol? It's one of the ones that has always been quoted most, and a few years ago a graduate student named Jennifer Sichel found the original tapes of the interview, and the conversation is all about homosexuality.

I knew about their existence before anyone else, but I would have had to go to Venice to listen to them and I didn't have time. So a graduate student found them first, and published the transcript of them. So within a year of beginning his Pop practice, Warhol is completely interested in that practice as being tightly bound up with homosexuality. And the important critics at the time were gay, although some were conflicted about it. The New York art world of the 1960s had a really gay culture. To see that in 1963 talking about homosexuality is the most important thing Warhol felt he could be doing—that's pretty amazing.

KB
That is amazing. Do you consider him to have been trans and fluid, or was he clearly a cis man?

BG
I mean, cis men can play with gender fluidity without really being gender fluid. You know, there's this story that I assume is true, that when he was in college in the late 1940s there was an assignment to paint a self-portrait. And he hands in a picture that more or less looks like Shirley Temple, the girl with the curls. And a classmate says, "Andy, is that a picture of your sister?" And he says, "No, it's me; I always wanted to know what I would look like as a girl."

But I think that much more than now, because of mistaken concepts in the culture at large, there was an assumption that all gay men were by definition feminine—and this was also the case in the psychological literature.

KB
You were a sissy.

BG
You were not just a sissy *man*—you were effeminate, half female.

KB
The third sex?

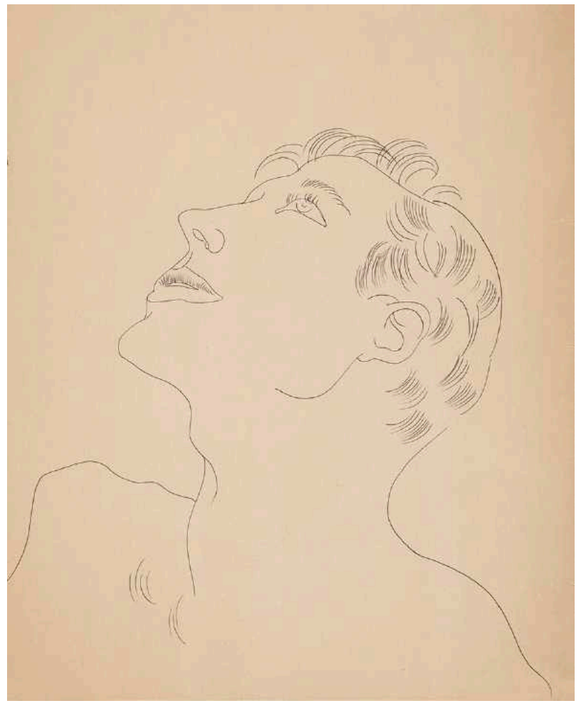
BG
And then the very fact that you were a bottom automatically made you female. It's in the Freudian literature, it's in all the period literature. And I assume—it's an assumption, but I think it's safe—that this is the reason Warhol didn't go fight in Korea in the 1950s. You know, he was rated 1-A at one moment, and then the next time he gets a draft card he's 4-F. So with the first one, he's ready to go to Korea, and then a year later, he's ruled ineligible for medical reasons. And the only medical reason would have been that he was gay. Nothing changes in his body in the interim. But if you were gay that was one way not to go to Korea, and it was a little dangerous because you could end up in other kinds of trouble—maybe in a psychiatric institution. But it was one way to not go to Korea and that means his homosexuality had an immediate effect on his life, a practical effect.

KB
I made a list of works to include in the show. And then I was explaining it to younger colleagues and they said, "Oh, it's a hidden Warhol, it's a queer Warhol, it's a gay Warhol, it's a fluid Warhol, it's a trans Warhol. The secretive Warhol, the dark Warhol, the doubting Warhol." Yes, and then I always add, "the illegal Warhol"—because if you think about it, the works, the depictions were illegal at the time.

BG
But also the celebratory Warhol. That is, not just in the way that my gay friends party—which I think Warhol was interested in, too—but there's a celebration of the avant-garde in his gay persona. So the very fact that some of his images might be illegal has that quality of daring and courage. It's a very traditional twentieth-century model of avant-garde art and culture. I mean, when you look at his college teachers' course notes, they were feeding Warhol a well-established notion of the avant-garde, of the countercultural.

His most important teacher loved the fact that he was once arrested for having punched a cop. It was a whole notion of countercultural existence that was really important to Warhol; it was wrapped up in the very notion of making art for him.

KB
If Warhol were alive today, what's your guess, how would he socialize in our queer LGBTQ+ world?



ANDY WARHOL, UNIDENTIFIED MALE, 1950s, black ballpoint on Tan paper, 42.86 x 35.24 cm

BG
I think there's no way of answering that question because no one alive today was gay in Pittsburgh in the 1940s. I mean, he would be the same person he was, conflicted and broken, and at the same time more out than anyone else. I think an understanding of Warhol, more than almost any other figure, depends on the cultural and historical context. He is who he is and his art is what it is in that context, as much as a Renaissance altarpiece depends on Renaissance theology. So a Warhol *Sex Parts* image depends on what it meant to be gay from 1940 to 1990. And the world has changed too much for it to mean the same thing—in major metropolitan centers in the West. There are plenty of places where it's fatal—plenty of places in the United States where, if you walked down the street holding hands with your lover, you could very well be killed. So our notion that these victories are final and universal is completely false.

KB
For me, it's always so interesting that in the 1920s in Berlin, you could be an openly gay museum director, and ten years later you would be sent to a concentration camp because ten years earlier you had said, "I'm an openly gay museum director." Tides are shifting, and Berlin, especially, has obviously had that loop of history.

Susan Sontag and I worked on that crazy exhibition twenty years ago which was called "Into Me / Out of Me."[11] It was so explicit. People were like, "Really? Do you have to show that?" And in this Warhol show I think that's perhaps one reaction that I don't want to have—I don't want to do something that is repulsive, because Warhol is not about the repulsive, Warhol is about seductive beauty. "Into Me / Out of Me." also had the abject in it, and I don't really want to have the abject in this show. If you think about Warhol's beautiful fifties drawings and their aesthetics, it's always (*falsetto*) "I'm a flower. I'm a shoe / I'm lips." So I don't want it to be abject. I want it to be beautiful.

BG

You know, I don't think anyone has drawn a direct visual line between the fifties images and the *Sex Parts*, and that's kind of interesting. You could argue that the *Sex Parts* are to the 1980s what the drawings are to the 1950s—that is, the world has changed enough that they have the same relationship to their moment.
And it seems to me that today we all have to figure out what both those moments mean to us today—and what a great artist like Warhol, who lived through those moments, can tell us about his times and ours. That's what your show will help us figure out.

1 The KW Institute for Contemporary Art, also known as Kunst-Werke Berlin, was founded in 1991 by Klaus Biesenbach and four other students. It works with various German and international art institutions, such as MoMA PS1.

2 Paragraph 175 was introduced in 1871 in the German Empire and punished "unnatural fornication" between men. From 1936 onwards, under the Nazi regime, suspicion alone was sufficient to receive a prison sentence of up to ten years. During the Third Reich, up to 50,000 men were imprisoned and around 15,000 were sent to concentration camps. Since 1957, there were various moderations of the paragraph in the GDR and FRG, but it was not until 1994 that the Bundestag decided to abolish it for good. As of March 2019, victims of persecution have been able to apply for compensation for the negative effects on their lifes. https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/DE/ueber-diskriminierung/diskriminierungsmerkmale/sexuelle-identitaet/paragraph_175/paragraph_175_node.html Last viewed February 2, 2024.

3 "Andy Warhol Look: Glamour, Style, Fashion," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, November 8, 1997–January 18, 1998.

4 Titian's 1534 painting of a reclining nude woman gazing directly at the viewer is his most overtly sexual work.

5 Famous series of erotic engravings (c. 1524–27) by Italian engraver Marcantonio Raimondi (c. 1470/82–c. 1534) in collaboration with Giulio Romano (c. 1499–1546), also known as *The Sixteen Pleasures*. Raimondi was briefly imprisoned for his work on *I Modi*, and copies of the book were destroyed.

6 New Queer Cinema road movie from 1991 about two young friends working as street hustlers.

7 Alan Downs, *The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 2005).

8 "Pre-exposure prophylaxis:" antiviral medications taken as a preventive measure by individuals who are at a higher risk of HIV infection.

9 Island near New York City with a strong party culture and a gay settlement founded in the 1950s.

10 At the outset of his career, American conceptual artist Bruce Nauman (b. 1941) embraced the idea that whatever happens in the studio is art. This resulted in a series of video works that feature the artist performing simple, repetitive tasks, including *Walking in an Exaggerated Manner around the Perimeter of a Square* (1967–68), *Pacing Upside Down* (1969), and *Playing a Note on the Violin While I Walk around the Studio* (1967–68).

11 Group exhibition at MoMA PS1, June 25–September 25, 2006.

BLAKE GOPNIK

(born 1963) is an American art critic who has lived in New York City since 2011, where he is now a Contributing Critic to the New York Times. He previously spent a decade as chief art critic of The Washington Post, prior to which he was an arts editor and critic in Canada. He has a doctorate in art history from Oxford University. He is the author of Warhol, the first comprehensive biography of the American artist Andy Warhol.

IT'S ALWAYS THERE

A CONVERSATION WITH

DONNA DE SALVO

December 2023

Klaus Biesenbach
When you think about it, is this actually the first exhibition ever—the first comprehensive exhibition—that shows Warhol as a gay artist?

It's interesting; I talked to Blake Gopnik, and he said, "Klaus, what are you doing?" And I said, "I'm actually following Warhol's obsession from the forties and fifties." His obsession with depicting male beauty—for example, in drawing, then in film and the *Screen Tests*, and Joe Dallesandro in the sixties… Victor Hugo, all the Polaroids and the *Torso* paintings in the seventies… then Jed Johnson, Jon Gould… I'm following his process of finding form for what he desires, for his ideal of beauty.

Donna De Salvo
You mean, the aesthetics of it.

KB
And then I asked Blake, "Was that really all art?" Because that is the one thread that runs from the forties to the eighties, right?

I think a question is that one could say, "Oh, perhaps it wasn't really Warhol's art; it was just his personal pleasure." But I think it's *the* one thread that goes from the forties to the end of his life.

DDS
Oh, absolutely. It's always there. Although that side of Warhol was not always manifest; it was often what I would say, "camouflaged," hidden.

KB
And why was that?

DDS
Because I think being a gay man in the New York art world—well, look at Johns and Rauschenberg. To be outwardly gay at that time was difficult, if not quite discouraged. The culture wasn't really accepting of it. And even in the sixties—I mean, the one thing I learned from talking to various people was that the films of the sixties—the Sculls and other collectors weren't looking at them. There was the Downtown crowd, and there was the Upper East Side crowd (*laught*er).

So, people knew that Warhol was gay, but I don't think he spoke about it outside of his inner circle. Maybe it's in *The Andy Warhol Diaries*. He dealt with it in a very nuanced way. For instance, we've talked about the *Thirteen Most Wanted Men*, right? Which looks like it's just bad boys, or antiheroes—but then the other part of it (*laught*er) is that they're also *the most wanted men*. And I think that was Warhol's genius, he was able to select images that could be interpreted on multiple levels—they were coded. There's an excellent essay you should read in the catalog for an exhibition I did with Paul Schimmel called *Hand-Painted Pop*.[1] It's by Ken Silver, and called "Modes of Disclosure: The Construction of Gay Identity and the Rise of Pop Art." And it really is *the* first essay I can think of, written by an art historian, that explores this topic. He talks about Johns and Rauschenberg, and Marsden Hartley, and, of course, Warhol. This way of coding an image is not new. It all depends on who's reading it.

KB
But some of the works were illegal, basically; they could have been seen as pornographic, and that was illegal at that time.

DDS
Well, yeah, and they're still difficult. At the Whitney,[2] there were some initial concerns about showing *Sex Parts*—that's the big difference between the United States and Germany, where nudity—

KB
Nudity, traditionally, is something different. I think Berlin is possibly the only place where a large democratic board like ours would say "Oh it's great," but they also see that you can only do the show here and now. Perhaps not in three years, perhaps not five years ago, and perhaps it cannot travel.

At one point, when you go and deepen your research into the photographs and the films, you think he really was obsessed, for forty-plus years, with finding beauty, finding form for that object of desire, that libidinous object. He wanted to visualize his ideal beauty. And then you think of the window decorating and the celebrity portraits almost as a money job. I'm overdoing it a little bit, but—

DDS
No, doing window design was a way for artists to make a living. Johns and Rauschenberg did it, Jim Rosenquist—there were a number of artists who supported their art that way. And then there were also a number of gay men who did it, who had that flair for decorating (*laught*er)—you know, it almost sounds like a stereotype, but—

KB
But the celebrity portraits—he got so famous for them—

DDS
He did.

KB
And still many people think of Warhol as a celebrity portrait painter. Whereas I think—and I'm a little bit out there, perhaps—I think they were a money job. Painting the celebrity portraits was the money job, and his real passion was for these works that are now grouped in this exhibition.

DDS
Yeah, I think that's true. When we did the room of portraits at the Whitney we tried to show the range, and I believe that with people with whom he had a real connection, some of those portraits are genuinely beautiful. And then there are others that are cookie-cutter—you know, where he got money to paint some industrialist's wife, blah blah blah—they're formulaic. So I agree with you about many of them. A lot of people don't like them; they just think that they're bad. There are some that are beautiful, but he made hundreds of them, so—

KB
I don't dislike them, but—perhaps you've seen that book that Diana Widmaier Picasso did, years ago, titled *Picasso Art Can Only Be Erotic*. It was about the fact that Picasso depicted his desire—obviously, his straight desire—and it was always much celebrated that he could depict this in a more macho, man-driven world. And that's a thread that runs through Picasso's oeuvre, but then with Warhol, you couldn't show that thread that runs through the decades, and you couldn't piece it together—

DDS
Which, by the way, could be an interesting topic for an essay. Because, again, I think that Warhol, as a gay man in the larger culture, could not fully be out. You know, when you look at *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, the Netflix series, it's interesting to hear all the different ways people perceived him: what they knew about Warhol, what he revealed about himself. He wasn't really out to his family, as I've told you, so I do think that—

KB
But see, "not out"—that's so interesting. You know, I love throwing Halloween parties, and I always threw one at the museum. And one Halloween I bought a Warhol wig at one of these Halloween stores. And then I thought, "No, I can't be the museum director and wear a Warhol wig, that's really ridiculous." So I bought it, because I couldn't resist, but I didn't wear it to the Halloween party. But then I wore it on a regular Saturday out in the city—like, out and about, I just wore it as a wig, because I wanted to know how it feels to wear a wig.

DDS
That's a great idea!

KB
I have white hair, so it's not like I was trying to look younger. It's a different look. And I actually felt very much like, "I am in drag." With the wig, I felt like I was in drag. It was different in Warhol's day, because people wore wigs more frequently. So do you think that when he ran around with the silver exploded wig, he looked like he was in drag? Because that's so different from "he wasn't out," if he was in drag.

DDS
Well, I think that people must have assumed he was gay, but no one ever talked about it. When I say "people," I mean the larger culture, right? And Warhol chose to wear a wig that deliberately looked like drag. You know, he could have worn something very different. When you look at photographs of him from the fifties, he is wearing something more conventional. But, by the sixties, he's fashioned this persona—and makes it part of his artistic statement, it's a mask, to some extent, a character.

KB
But the character is a drag character, in a funny way?

DDS
It is a drag character, absolutely. Although it's interesting: In the eighties, he does have this classic look, right? The jeans, the boots, black turtleneck—it was pre-Steve Jobs, you know? He had a certain kind of Downtown look to him—and then he had the wig.

KB
I always think—and I'm speculating, and I'm sure it's wrong, but when I first saw *Ladies and Gentlemen*, I thought, "He found his people." Because he was in drag, and he was out there in a not-fitting way, and he had some sort of a mask, or masquerade.

DDS
But some of those paintings—Glenn Ligon writes about them in my catalog for the Whitney show, how incredibly well-painted they are. When you look at all of them—

KB
They're incredible paintings, yeah.

DDS
The colors are incredible. There's a lot of freedom in that work. Some of them are bold, loud; they're not at all demure, they are exuberant. So it's interesting to speculate about whether the relationship to the subject in that series was something that really got him going, that really—

KB
It's a celebration.

DDS
A celebration, and there's an outrageousness about them. I mean, there are an enormous number of those paintings that exist, so the fact that he sustained that over that period of time is really interesting, I think.

KB
Glenn Ligon was critical of the fact that the models only got fifty or a hundred dollars.

DDS Yes. He wrote from the perspective of looking at these people of color, and that they were being ripped off. Now, I don't know; other people have argued, "Well, that's what models would be paid, and yes, they didn't benefit from the sale of the paintings, but has that ever happened in the history of art?" But the more important point—and Glenn was right—is that there are so few people of color in Warhol's paintings. They *are* in the Polaroids; there are a lot of Black men who appear in those—

KB
And of course in the eighties there was Basquiat.

DDS
Well, Basquiat, and then other Black men. But when you think about it, throughout the sixties, there are no Black subjects in Warhol's paintings. So Glenn was approaching it from a critical perspective because he's looking at the larger issue of race. And it's a critical point. It's interesting, also, in terms of the sexual fetishization of Black men, in many of those photographs. But then Warhol fetishizes everybody (*laughte*r).

KB
I think Warhol fetishizes beauty. He fetishizes extreme beauty. I remember when I moved to New York in the early nineties, in the apartment where the museum put me up, there was *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, the book. And I remember seeing pictures of Joe Dallesandro—and I was in my mid-twenties then.
He fetishizes beauty and tries to capture it, and it's actually a Jean-Michel Basquiat beauty, it's a Jed Johnson beauty, it's a Joe Dallesandro beauty. And the interesting thing is that he keeps on recording—photo, photo, photo, the Polaroids, a drawing. I almost think that the drawing was a prephotographic form of record-keeping. He wanted to depict this beauty.

DDS
Absolutely. When I worked at the Warhol Museum, I reviewed fifteen thousand *drawings*, from the early days to the end of his career, and when you look through the sketchbooks from the fifties, there are a huge number of drawings of men. I think these he made for himself, they are private and with few exceptions, were not shown until after his death. But most of the paintings he made at this time are quite different. Many are based on illustrations he found at the New York Public Library, as well as photographs taken by his friend, Edward Wallowitch. He also makes a painting in 1952 based on a photograph of the dancer John Butler, who danced with Martha Graham.

KB
The first libidinous painting of a man might be Elvis, right? That's a libidinous painting?

DDS
Yeah, I—

KB
But perhaps I'm going too far; I always think that in those multiple Elvis images,[3] the pulled up hands are a little bit of a sexual gesture—

DDS
No, I would say that's the case. Elvis is definitely the iconic image, because of the way Warhol positions him. And it's based on a publicity photograph from the 1960 film aptly titled *Flaming Star*. Of course there's also Marlon Brando,[4] but the thing about the Elvis painting is the way it appeals to multiple audiences, straight, gay, male, female.



ANDY WARHOL, UNIDENTIFIED MALE, 1950s, black ballpoint on Tan paper, 42.86 x 35.24 cm

KB
And he does like to dissect—with Mick Jagger, with Basquiat, but also with the other nudes—he likes to dissect the body into hands, arms, torso, chest. And in a funny way, the multiplicity with the Elvis paintings is—let's face it, Warhol had two boyfriends, Jon Gould and Jed Johnson, who were both twins, so the multiplicity is there too. He can't get enough, so he multiplies the Elvis.

DDS
I like that idea. That's an interesting thing you just said. Overall, he can't get enough. It's interesting to think of that notion in connection with repetition throughout Warhol's work. And the desire, of course, is also for money. And he can never get enough. But, it's provocative to consider that in terms of sexuality.

KB
Never getting enough.
But it's also what consumerism—capitalism—is running on. When you look at the Polaroids that he used for the *Torso* series, how many are there? (*laughter*) It's like cataloging the world—cataloging the butts of the world.

DDS
You know, speaking of Elvis, there's the Elvis boot. All the gold shoes are fantastic but to me, it's the most erotic. Because the others are quite camp—well, there's Mae West, but she's a gay icon.

ANDY WARHOL, TORSO, 1977, Polaroid™ polacolor, 10.8 x 8.6 cm



KB
There is a shoe fetishism, or a foot fetishism.
When you look at the drawings, when you look at the photographs, is there a line between art and pornography?

DDS
What makes something pornographic? That's a good question. I mean, that's a cultural convention.

KB
When I'm deciding what to include, I always think there has to be a certain artifice—finding form, or forming, so to speak. So there's a level of abstraction and repetition, or something else like that. When you look at the *Torso* paintings I selected, just by how they're treated with color as paintings—

DDS
Well, they're more classical.

KB
They're more classical; that's a beautiful word for it.

DDS
But as you know, when you see the photographs, where it hasn't gone through that level of transformation—

KB
"Level of transformation," that is the word I was looking for.

DDS
Yeah, there are some that are so explicit—people "taking it up the ass," and blow jobs and stuff—that you could say those are pornographic in some way, but it's a hard call. I say they're "explicit." They haven't gone through that next step. They're source material for Warhol; sketches, basically.

KB
Research, also.

DDS
Yeah, they are research. But again, this is the public/private thing throughout Warhol's work. I ran out of room in my exhibition: I really wanted to show that duality by juxtaposing explicit images with the more classical *Torso* paintings, where there's very little view of genitalia.

KB
You said there is a level of transformation; I would even say there is a level of *artistic* transformation, or *forming*, *form-finding* transformation. And they're less explicit, but they're more created by him.

DDS
Well, it's the difference between a painting and a photograph. Something painted has a different feeling to it. But we tend to see photographs as "real." And he never intended those photographs to be shown, for the most part. They were for his own use. OK, the *America* book has his photographs in it, *Exposures* too, but most were never shown in a museum or gallery context during his lifetime. I mean, that's why I am fascinated by the public/private aspect of Warhol's art. Because I do think, as a gay person—and he's not unique in this way—it's what you had to do: You had to construct a public persona, and then you had your own reality. And legions of people today don't feel that way—fortunately! But that was another generation and time.
Did this, as a result, drive things more? The insatiability, let's say—he could never get enough, right?—was that in part because he had to suppress something in the public domain, and his real self remain hidden? I don't know; this is where you get into a certain kind of psychology. It's my advice to you not to lose sight of the fact that some of these images remained private, and some of them remained public. So you do have this split that's taking place.

KB
Yeah. For me there are two points. On February 14, 1956—Valentine's Day—he opens that exhibition in New York, one of his first gallery exhibitions, *Studies for a Boy Book*.[5] And he's shocked that it's not an immediate big artistic success, but it was way out there in 1956 to sketch beautiful boys. Then twenty years later, he did the *Torso* painting show, first in Europe in 1977, and then at the Ace Gallery in Los Angeles in 1978. And I think—this is my theory—I think he felt like he had done it again: He had high hopes—

DDS
Were there really explicit images in that Ace show as well?

KB
The full-frontal nudity? That was in there. I looked at all the documentation I could find of the Ace show, and the pieces are displayed in multiples: They're either two, or they're three, or they're five. There is a full-frontal nudity. And there's also the "rear" side of it, which is butt to butt to butt to butt, so five butts. So there is full-frontal nudity, there is bending over—you can literally see anuses—so it is very explicit, but it's presented as a multiplicity. It's highly composed, and it's highly transformed. They're painted, and I think painting always looks more "art"—as in official, as in abstracted, as in worked on.

DDS
Yeah, absolutely.

KB
It's a different sphere of the world. It's not the real world; it's the art.

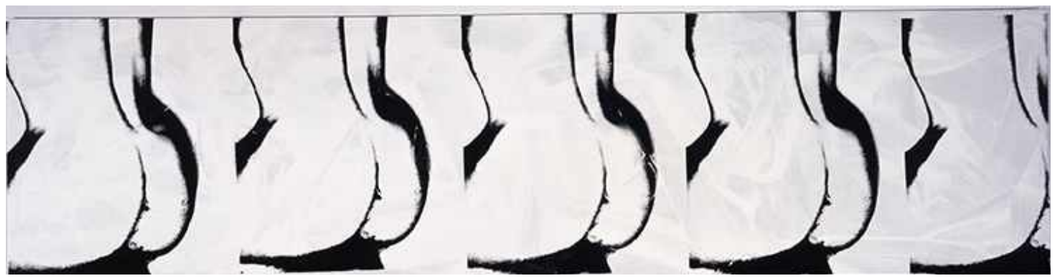
DDS
It's the art. Whereas the other is the real world. Photography always functions in that way. You can't unpack that. We still tend to see photographs as reality. Before I lose this thought: I've often quoted from an interview I conducted with the painter Philip Pearlstein, Warhol's college classmate. They moved to New York together. Pearlstein showed at the Tanager Gallery, a major cooperative gallery of Ab-Ex painters. Warhol asked him to take some of his paintings to Tanager because he wanted to get into a real gallery. But when Pearlstein showed up with Warhol's paintings of boys kissing boys, they laughed him out of the gallery.
So with regard to the boy book, when it really came down to it, Warhol wanted to be part of that mainstream art world. He wanted to be where Johns and Rauschenberg were; that was his desire. I think he figured out that doing the boy book wasn't going to get him there.

KB
It took him twenty years to do another boy book, which I think is the *Torso* paintings show.

DDS
Which is a very interesting observation, to discuss it in that context.

KB
And the *Torso* painting show—I heard people loved the *Torso* paintings. So in private, in a small community, people were fascinated by them. I was sitting in Erika Hoffmann's collection office—we were having a conversation about Félix González-Torres—and I looked behind her

ANDY WARHOL, TORSO, 1977, acrylic and silk-screen ink on canvas, 127 x 518.2 cm





Andy Warhol and Nico attend a ‚Freak-out' party featuring a Velvet Underground and Nico performance at the Action House, Island Park, Long Island, New York, 4th December 1966

and I said, "Erika, you have a *Torso* painting behind you! At first I thought you had this abstract painting, but we are looking at a double butt!" (*laught*er)

DDS
An abstracted butt. (*laught*er)

KB
Victor Hugo owned the original hammer and sickle. Which I thought was so interesting, that *this* came from *that*. Because of course there's also "Each Man Kills the Thing He Loves," which is the song that Jeanne Moreau sings in Rainer Werner Fassbinder's film *Querelle*.[6] And Warhol was obsessed with *Querelle*; he was obsessed with Fassbinder. I think there is a certain obsession in his inability to get enough, but if you can't get enough, you're close to death. And I think the Victor Hugo connection has some closeness to death.

DDS
Well, and then there's Warhol's fear of having once basically died and being brought back to life after he was shot. There aren't many artists in the twentieth century who were nearly—I don't want to say "assassinated," but—

KB
So Warhol woke up, and he had that beautiful, beautiful man sitting next to him as a nurse, Jed Johnson. He gets shot, and then Jed Johnson is sitting next to him, the man of his dreams, and they fall in love and move in with each other. But then, if you nearly died, I assume you also want to live; you want to think about, "What have I not had before I nearly died?"

DDS
Yes—although you always get the sense Warhol had a lot of paranoia, he was clearly terrified. But this idea of never getting enough is something to pursue. That is one of your connecting threads. And how to play that out on every level: the consumerism, the money, but also the sexuality.

KB
For Warhol it seems sex and beauty are for a fleeting moment in your life, so beauty equals youth. Beauty equals this perfection that Joe Dallesandro had for perhaps a year, and that Jed Johnson had for perhaps some years. Beauty is something fleeting.

DDS
And Warhol saw himself as incredibly unattractive. As a gay man, he was not beautiful. He had bad skin, he was going bald—you know, that's all over the place; you can see that he's kind of obsessed. But that's why I love *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, because I think you can overemphasize certain things with Warhol, become too reductive, he's such a complex character. I love that book because it cuts through a lot of stuff.

You know, if you do want to know more about Jed Johnson, the person to talk to is his twin brother, Jay. He's in the *Diaries*, and he's such a lovely man. In the *Diaries*, he wanted to set the record straight about Warhol's relationship with Jed. He said so many people said so many things about Jed, but he knew the real story. And what he says is very moving; he was a beautiful man.

But I think this idea of "never enough" is absolutely a thread with Warhol, and how you conceptualize that in terms of the installation is going to be critical.

KB
There's a sequence in Jean Genet's novel *Querelle de Brest*, and also in *Querelle* the movie, that implies the idea of homosexuality is like kissing a mirror, because it's the same—you're looking for the same. And I remember when I first came to New York, a slightly older friend of mine explained to me: "These are Chelsea boys; they really, really look alike. They try to find a boyfriend who looks slightly better than they do, but very similar. So they all look like twins."

DDS
But a slightly better model. (*laught*er)

KB
A slightly better version. I love the idea of Warhol not feeling himself to be beautiful but wanting to be loved, and wanting to look for beauty—he felt more beautiful being with a Joe Dallesandro, he felt more beautiful being with a Jed Johnson. He felt it about himself and he desired it.

DDS
Mm-hmm. And he surrounded himself with these very beautiful women, like Cornelia Guest, that were part of the entourage.

KB
Yeah, Edie Sedgwick is almost like a female version of him, in a way.

DDS
Well, his imagined self, the self he desired to be.

KB
I think what's important is what you just said about beauty, that he had that drive to find



Andy Warhol and Edie Sedgwick seated on stairs, undated photo

beauty. He felt ugly; he wanted to be beautiful. There are some driving forces, I think. One driving force is desire for an object, but he also wanted to be the object; he also wanted to be beautiful.

DDS
He desired on so many levels. He *aspired* to a lot—money, beauty, the affirmation of the art world. And the thing we'll never know—it was a question asked numerous times in the *Diaries*—"Was Warhol ever happy?" And I don't know that anybody can ever answer that.

KB
But is anybody ever happy?

DDS
Well, that's a big question! (*laughter*) He clearly took pleasure from many things. That he was as driven as he was is because he was a genius artist. Picasso was driven; we can look at all these characters who were larger than life—and that was Warhol, too. He had an incredible mind, a true visual thinker and an insatiable curiosity and that insatiability worked on so many different levels. I think the "never enough" is often what one sees in deeply ambitious people. They're always innovating; "What's the next idea?" And in Warhol's case, even though he traded in repetition, he didn't repeat himself.

1 *Hand-Painted Pop: American Art in Transition, 1955–62*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, December 6, 1992–March 7, 1993. Traveled to Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, April 3–June 20, 1993; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, July 16–October 3, 1993.

2 *Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again*, November 12, 2018–March 31, 2019. Traveled to: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, May 18–September 2, 2019; Art Institute of Chicago, October 20, 2019–January 26, 2020.

3 Warhol's 1963 Elvis paintings, which were based on a still from the 1960 Hollywood *Western Flaming Star*, feature multiple images of the singer pointing a gun at the viewer.

4 Warhol's 1966 portrait of Brando depicts him in costume as a motorcycle gang member.

5 Studies for a Boy Book by Andy Warhol, Bodley Gallery, New York, February 14–March 3, 1956.

6 The song takes its title and refrain from a line in Oscar Wilde's poem "The Ballad of Reading Gaol."

DONNA DE SALVO

is an American curator who is Dia Art Foundation's Senior Adjunct Curator of Special Projects. She previously served as the Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Programs at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York where she organized the 2018 exhibition "Andy Warhol—From A to B and Back Again as well as the 1989 exhibition "Success Is a Job in New York: The Early Art and Business of Andy Warhol."

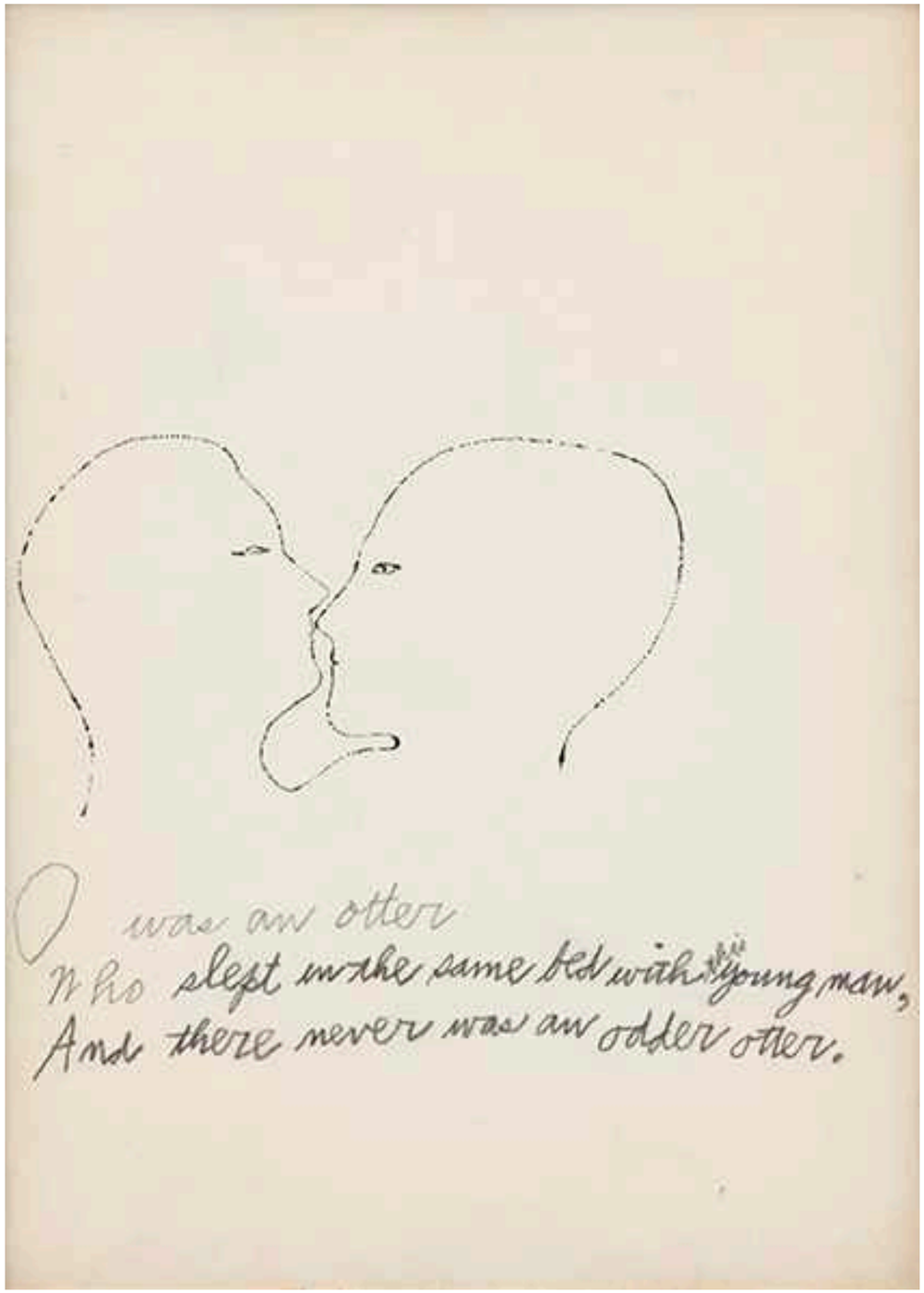
VELVET RAGE AND BEAUTY

WORKS FROM
1949–1987

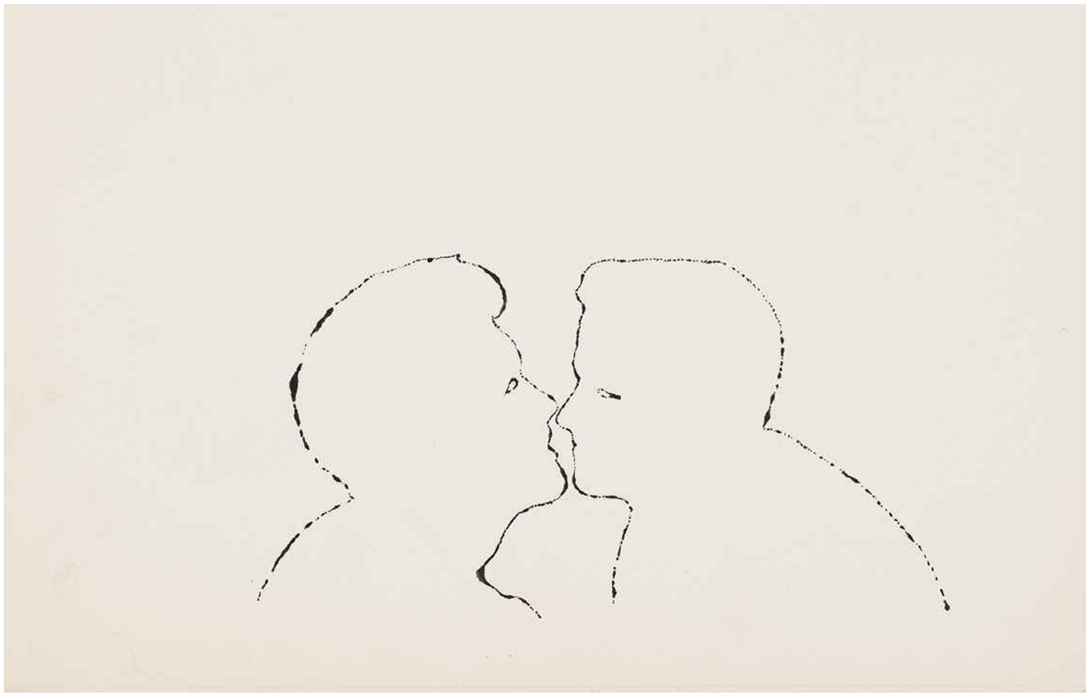


RECLINING BOY FULL FIGURE, 1948
pencil on paper — 27.9 × 21.5 cm

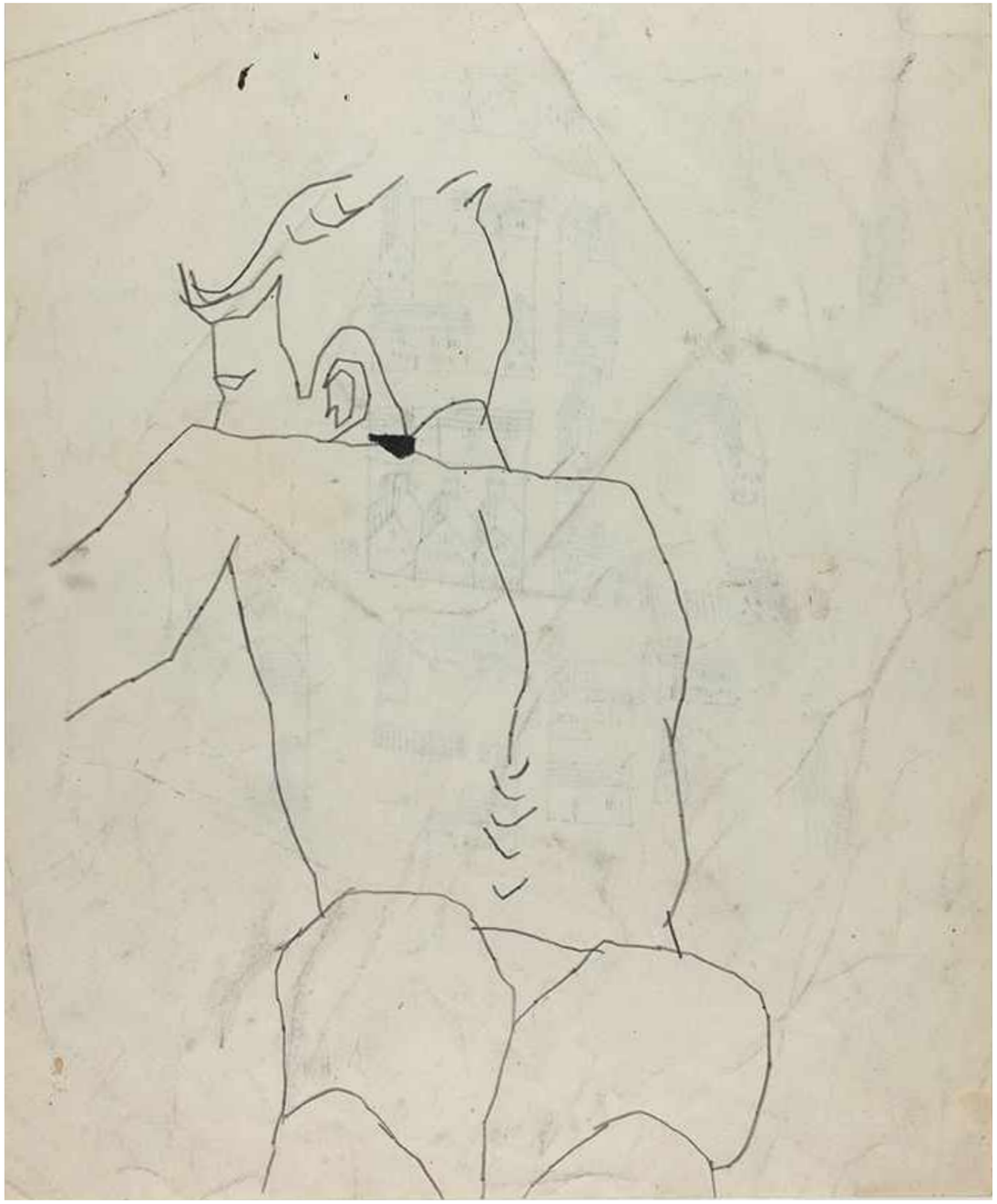
1950s



A IS AN ALPHABET, 1953
offset lithograph and graphite on paper — 17.8 × 12.4 cm



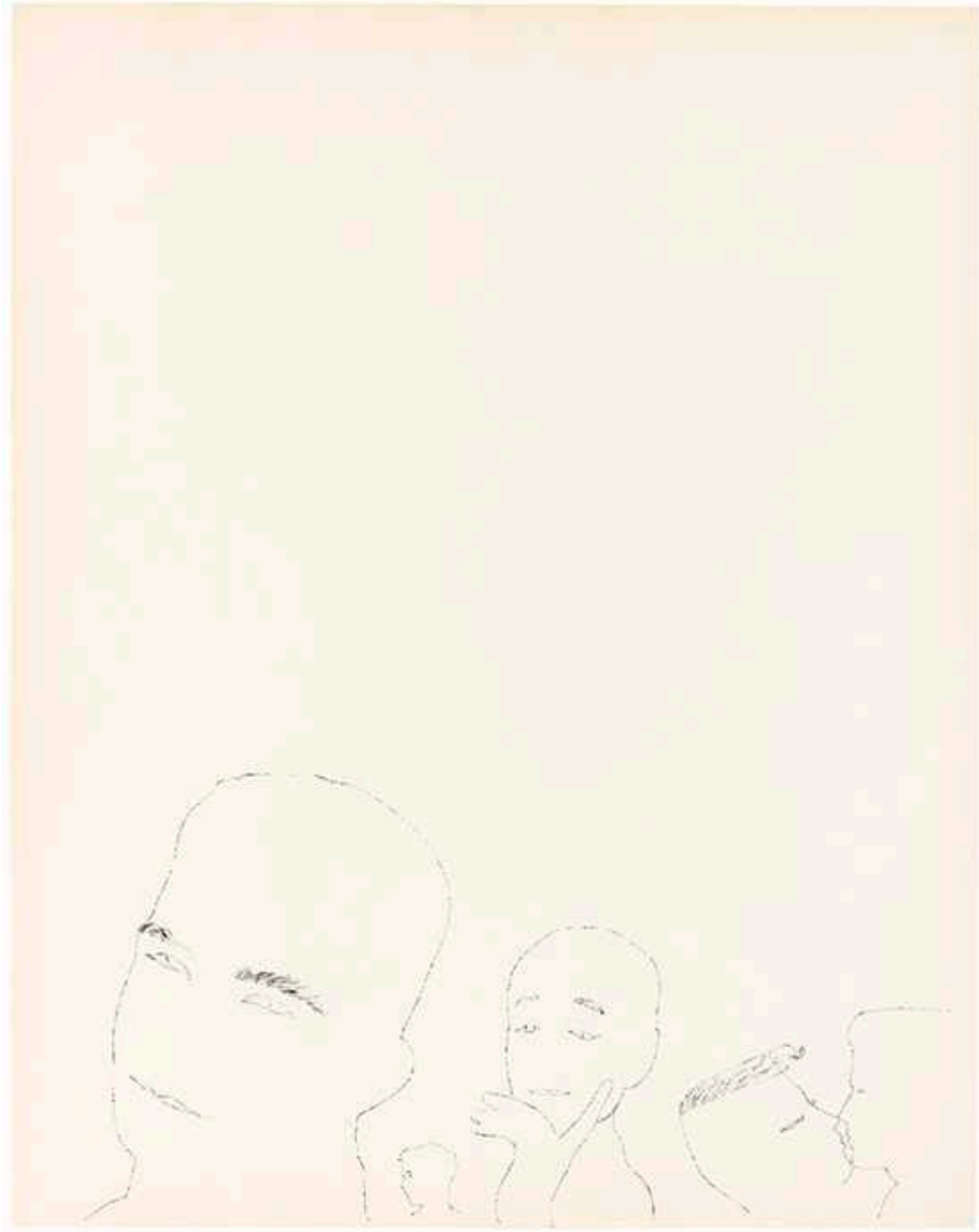
TWO MALE HEADS, 1950S
ink on Strathmore paper — 18.1 x 19.7 cm



MALE UPPER TORSO, 1950S
graphite on Bond paper — 27.9 x 21.6 cm



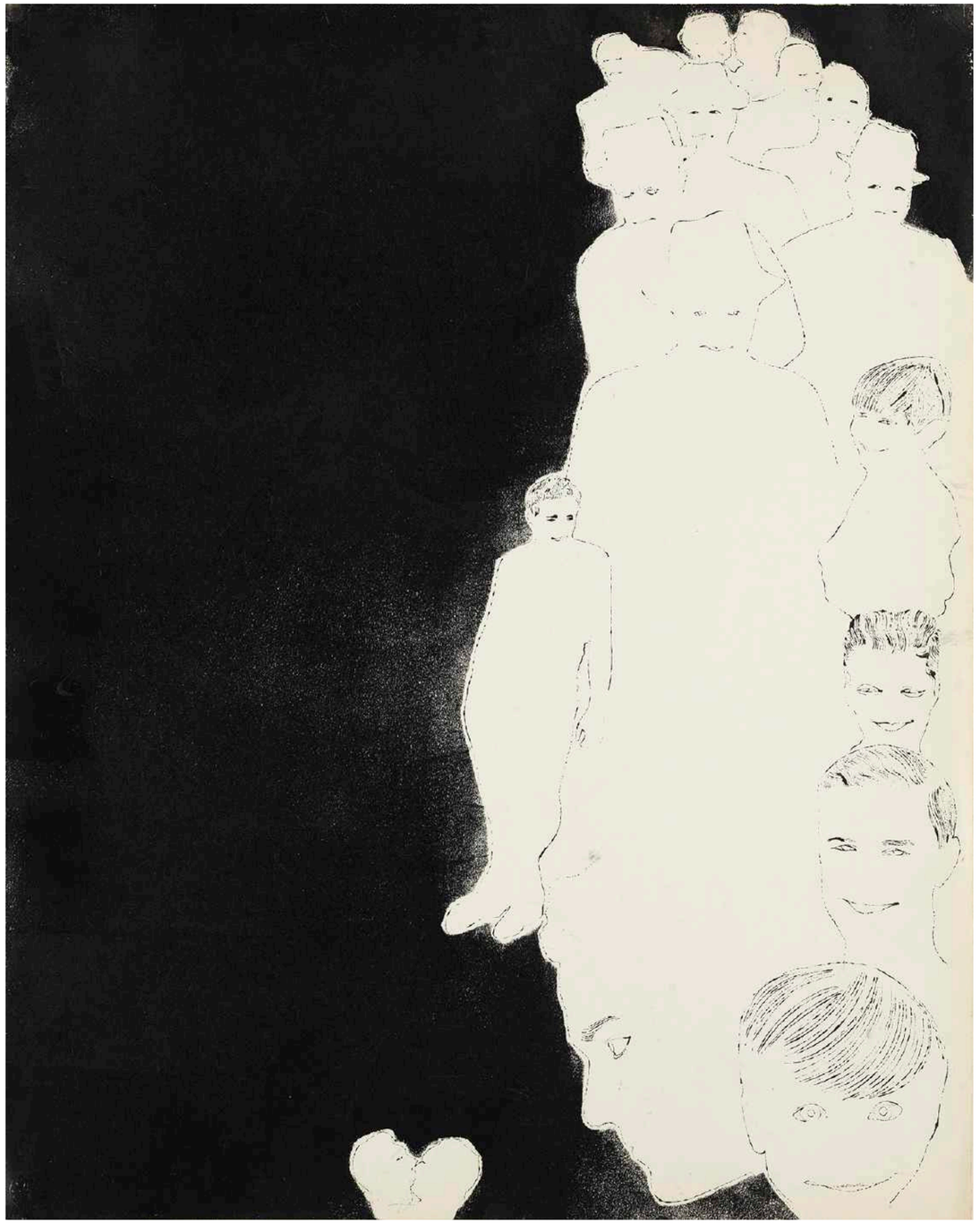
BLOTTED LINE FIGURES, 1953
ink on paper — 72.4 x 57.2 cm



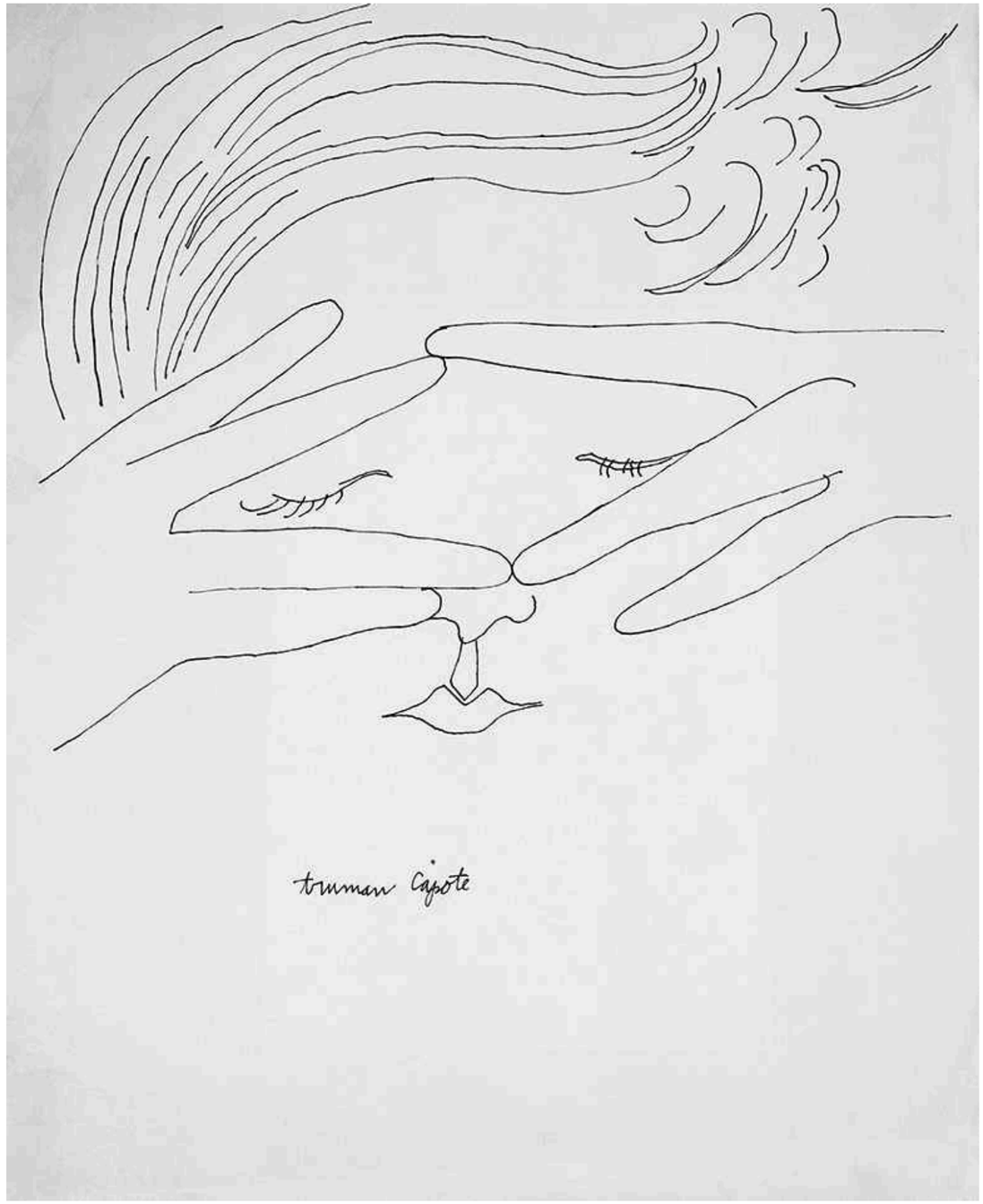
BLOTTED LINE FIGURES, 1953
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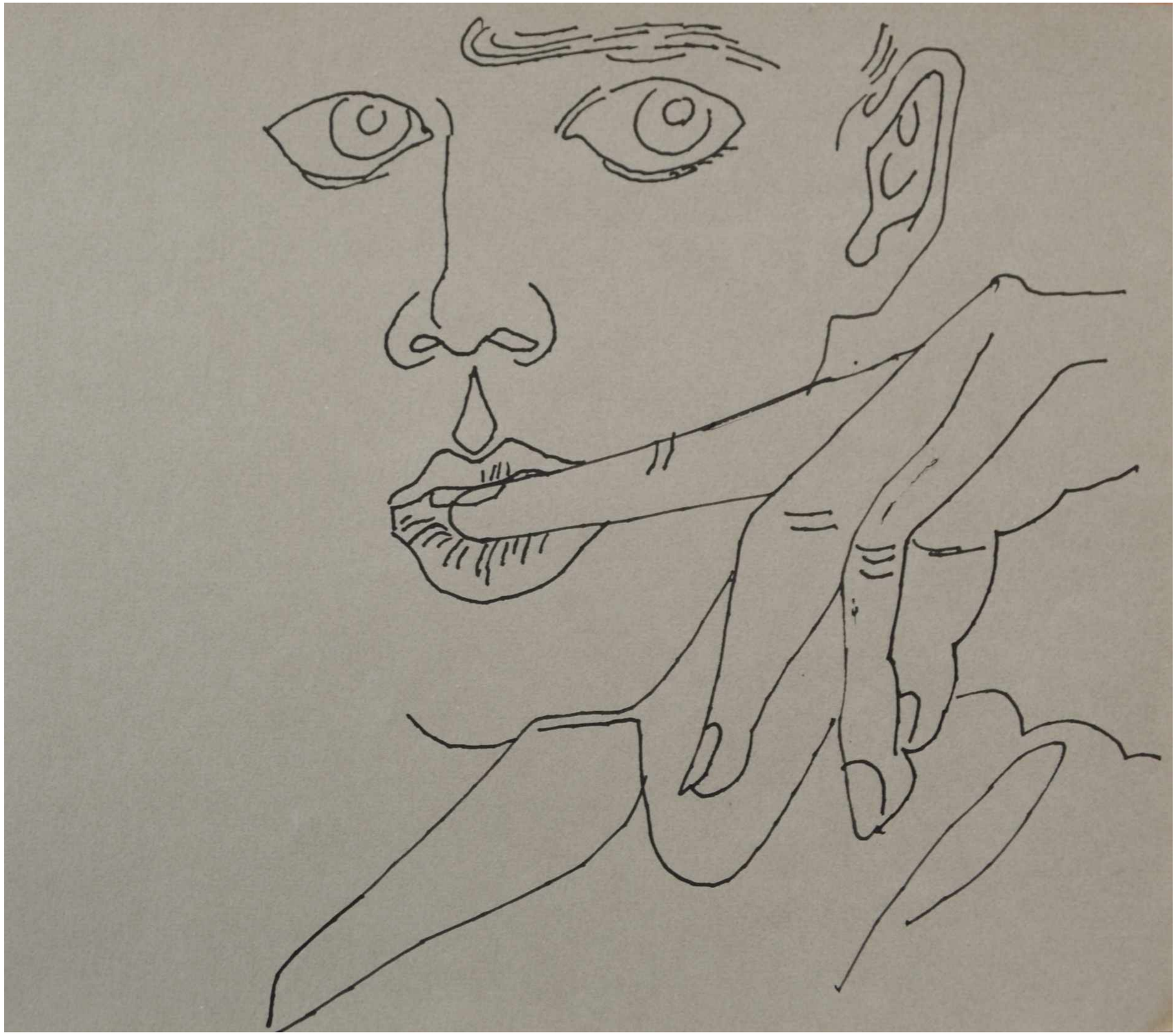
KISS, 1953
ink on paper — 73.7 x 58.2 cm



MALE HEADS, 1953
ink on paper — 73.6 x 58.4 cm



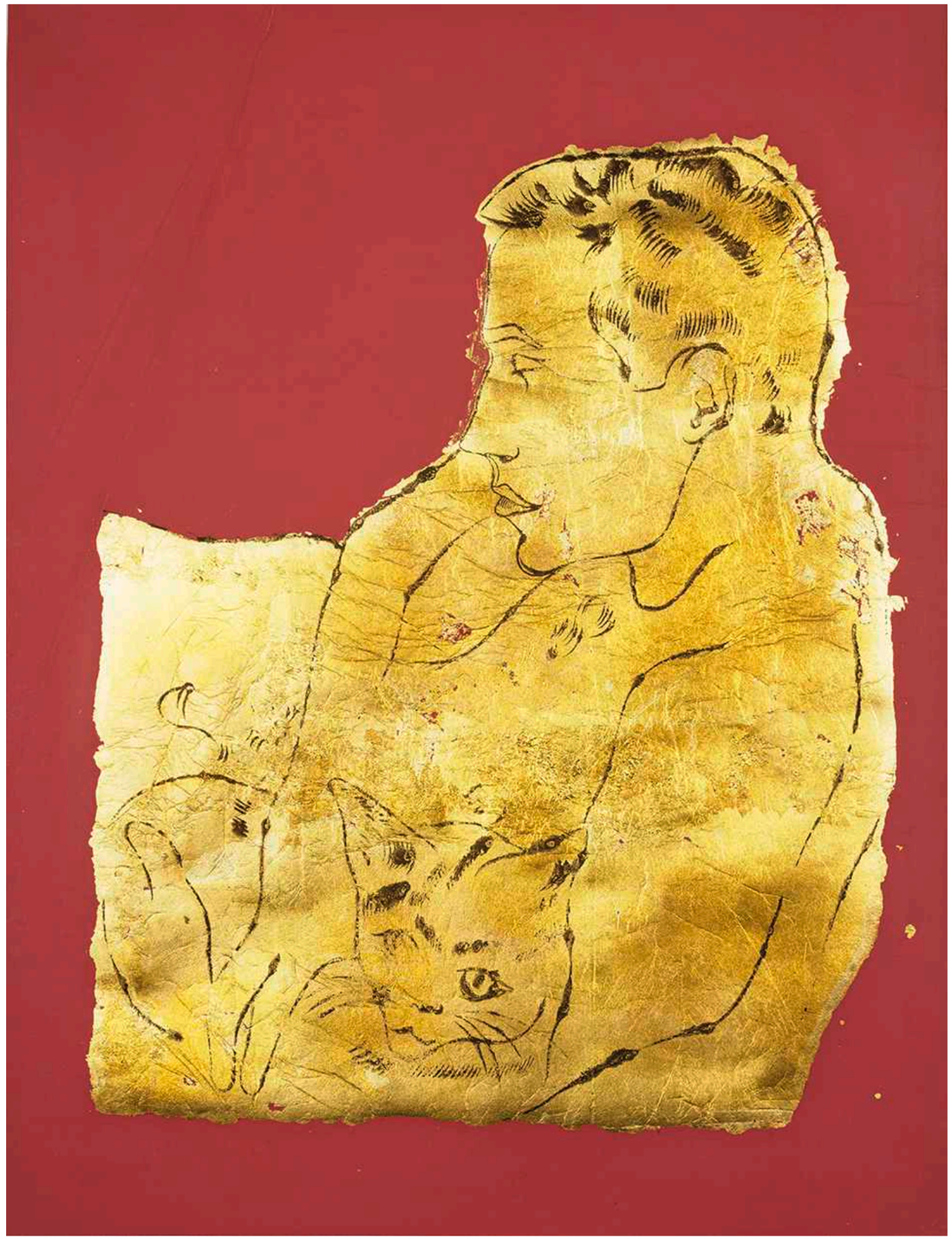
TRUMAN CAPOTE, 1954
ink on light, light chamois-colored printing paper — 42.6 × 34.9 cm



YOUNG MALE, 1956
ink on colored paper — 23.2 × 31.1 cm



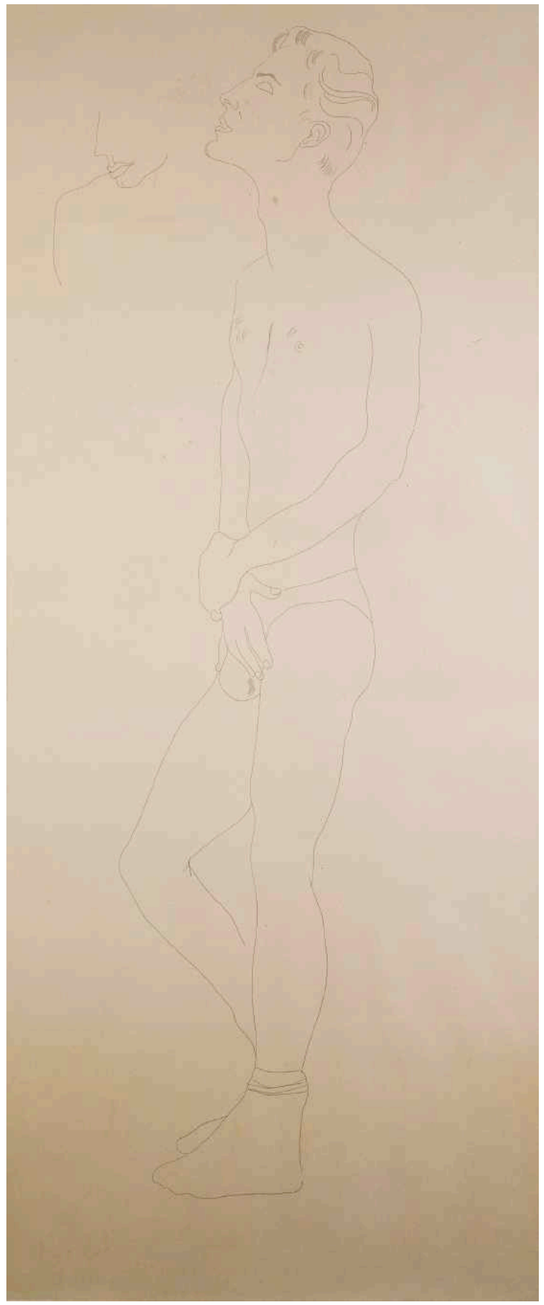
MARGARET RUTHERFORD, 1957
gold leaf, ink on heavy cardboard — 50.8 × 33 cm



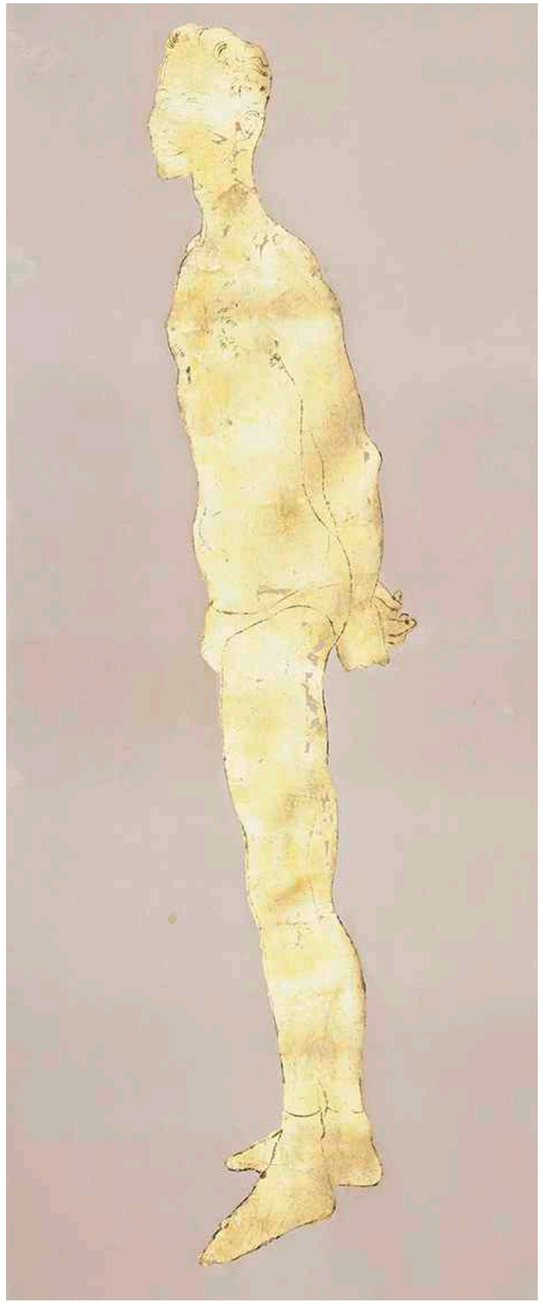
GOLDEN PORTRAIT WITH CAT, 1957
ink, gold leaf on thick, red colored paper — 54.1 × 40.7 cm



GOLDEN PORTRAIT, 1957
ink, gold leaf on thick, white Strathmore cardboard — 57.5 × 40 cm

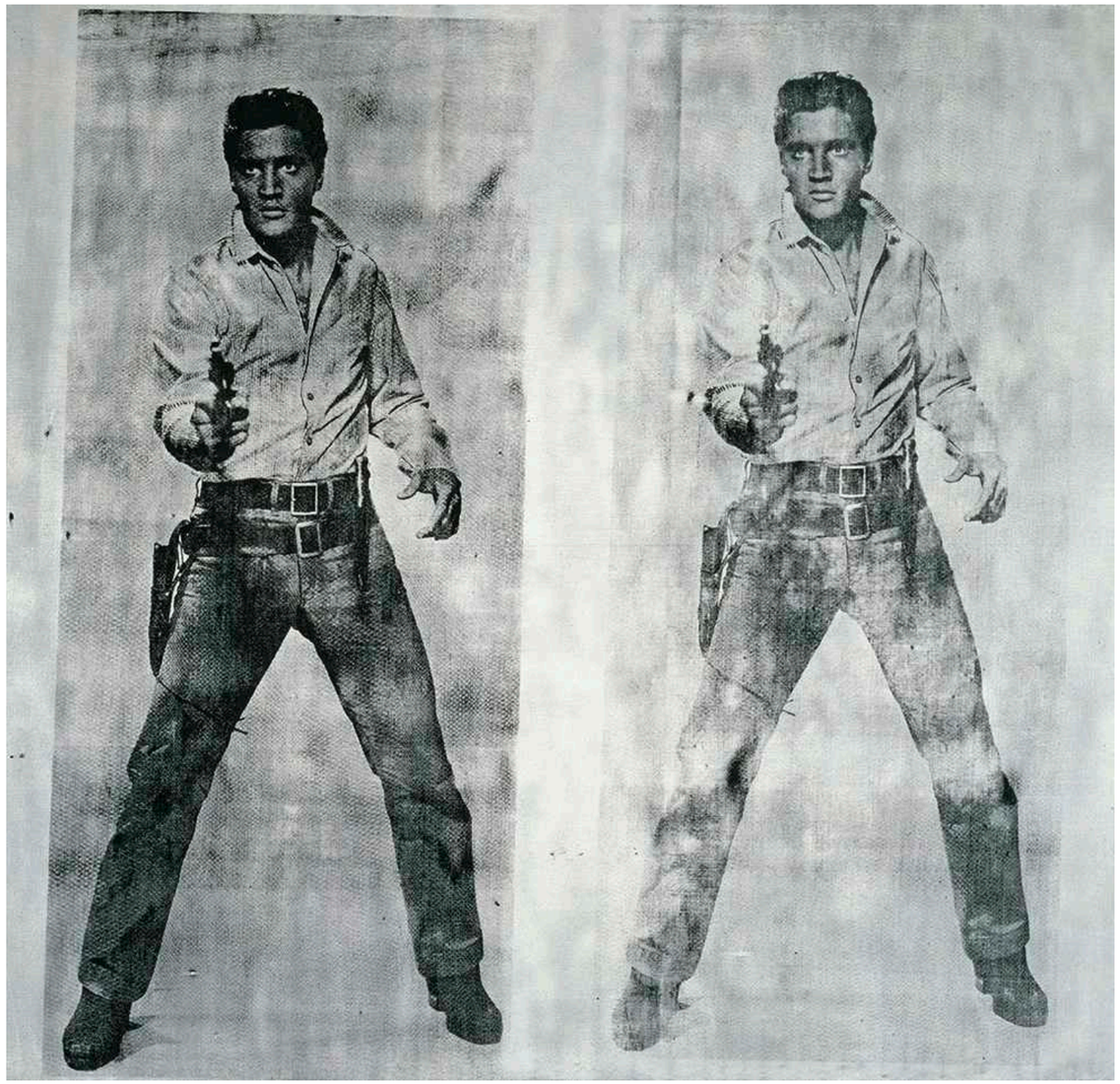


UNTITLED, 1950S
black ballpoint on Tan paper — 246.3 × 90.7 cm



UNTITLED (GOLDEN BOY), 1957
Ink, gold leaf, pencil on firm, chamois-colored drawing cardboard — 246.3 × 90.7 cm
Stiftung Sammlung Marx, Hamburger Bahnhof Berlin

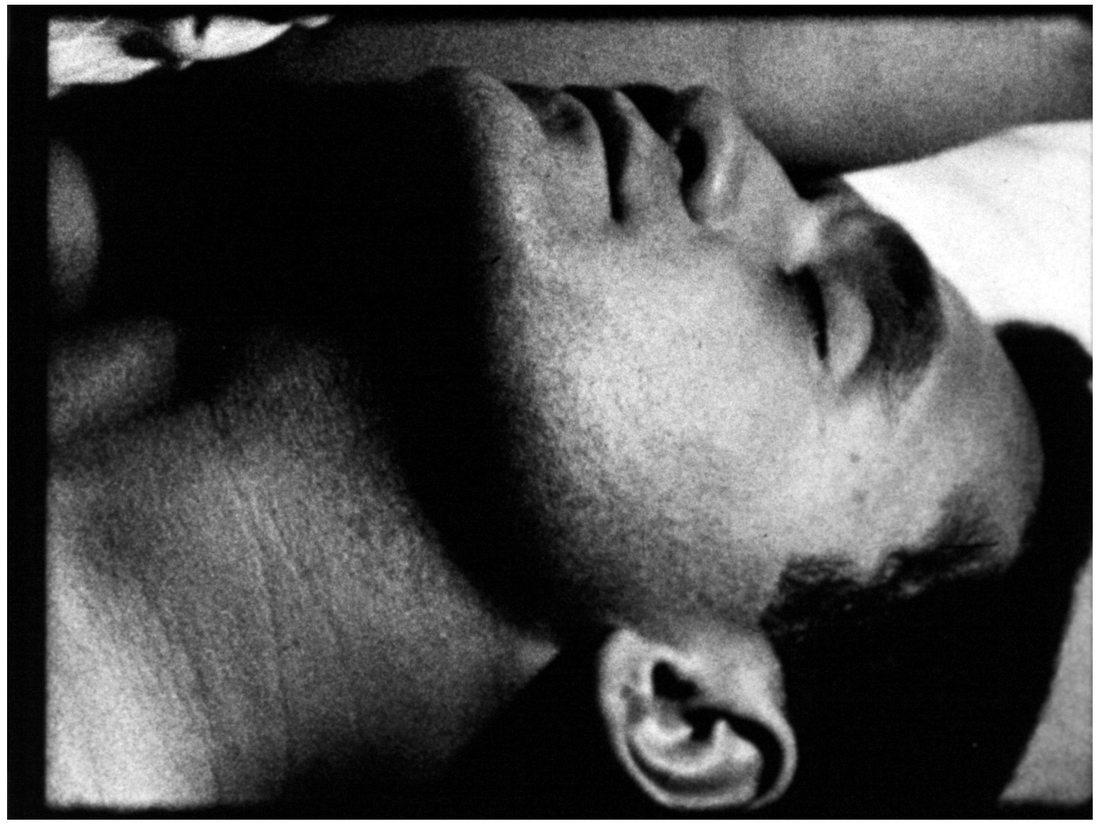
1960s



DOUBLE ELVIS, 1963
silk-screen ink and aluminum, paint on canvas — 211 × 223 × 3.5 cm



[JOHN GIORNO, OLD LYME, CONNECTICUT, 1963], 1963
16mm film transferred to digital file, black-and-white, silent — 3 min
The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA, a museum of Carnegie Institute



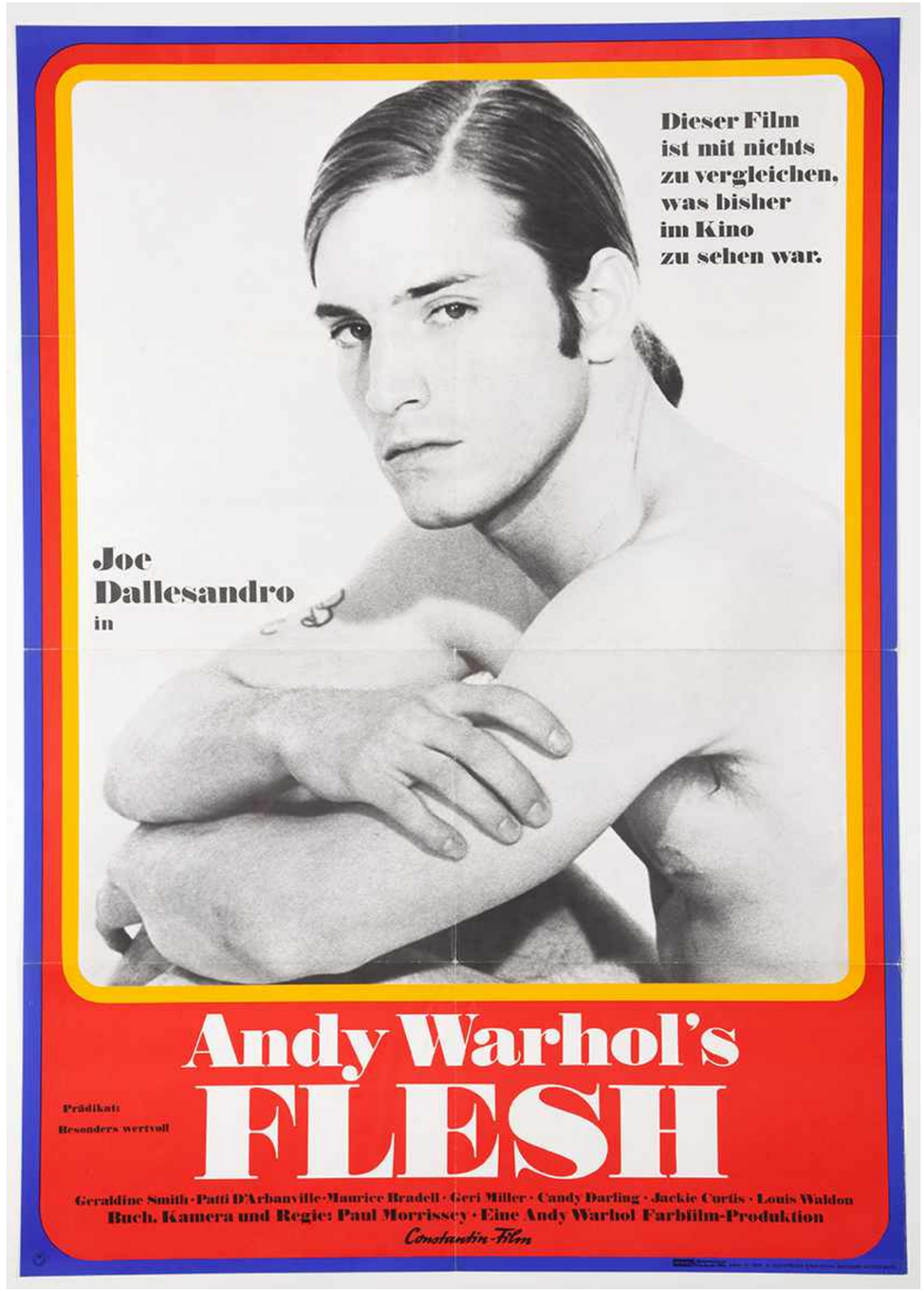
SLEEP, 1963
16mm film transferred to digital file, black-and-white, silent, 16 frames per second — 5 hours 21 minutes
The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA, a museum of Carnegie Institute



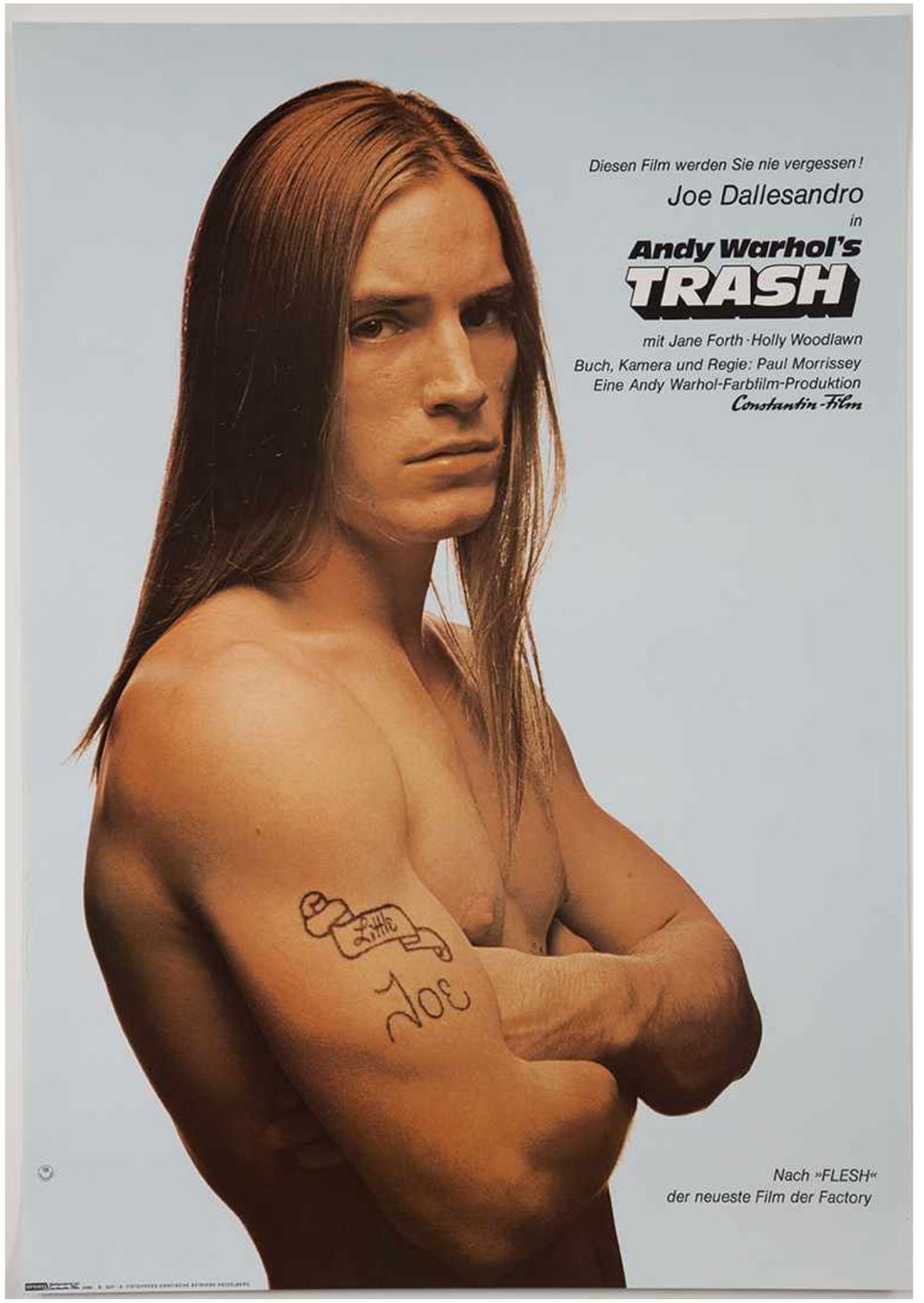
BLOW JOB, 1964
16mm film transferred to digital file, black and white, silent, 16 frames per second, 41 min



EMPIRE, 1964
16mm film transferred to digital file, black and white, silent, 16 frames per second, 8 h 5 min



POSTER ("FLESH"), GERMAN-LANGUAGE EDITION ADVERTISING POSTER FOR THE FILM "FLESH", 1968
offset lithograph on paper, — 83.8 x 59.2 cm

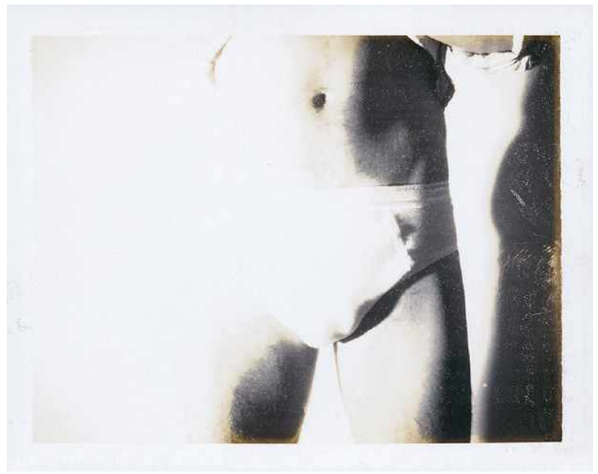


FILM POSTER ("TRASH"), CA. 1970
color offset photomechanical print on coated paper — 84 x 59.1 cm

1970s



MAN'S LOWER TORSO, 1971
Polaroid — 10.8 x 8.6 cm



MALE TORSO, 1971
Polaroid — 10.8 x 8.6 cm



MALE TORSO, 1971
Polaroid — 10.8 × 8.6 cm



MALE TORSO, 1971
Polaroid — 10.8 × 8.6 cm