



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

Kerri VanderHoff
Grand Rapids Art Museum
616.831.2914
kvanderhoff@artmuseumgr.org

Brian Burch
Lambert, Edwards & Associates
616-233-0500
bburch@lambert-edwards.com

**GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM ANNOUNCES EXCLUSIVE WARHOL EXHIBITION
RAPID EXPOSURE: WARHOL IN SERIES MARCH 14–JUNE 15, 2008**

Landmark Exhibition Presents More Than 100 Warhol Paintings and Print Portfolios Central to American Popular Culture

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., January 16, 2008 – The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM), a new leading cultural destination, presents the work of Andy Warhol (1928–1987), one of the greatest American artists of the 20th century.

Forever linked to the Pop art movement, Andy Warhol dominated American culture in the 1960s. Taking his subjects from the mass media, Warhol combined them with the technical processes he learned in the commercial world of design. *Rapid Exposure: Warhol in Series* is a chronological overview of more than 100 of the artist's paintings and prints, including the sixteen-panel *Jackies* (1964–1966), and the monumental silkscreen portfolios *Flash—November 22, 1963* (1968), *Campbell's Soup II* (1969), *Flowers* (1970), *Electric Chair* (1971), *Mao* (1972), and *Endangered Species* (1983).

In the realm of the modern print, Warhol's innovative use of screenprinting established him as one of the most important printmakers of his time. The exhibition is exclusive to the Grand Rapids Art Museum and is open March 14–June 15, 2008.

"*Rapid Exposure* investigates in depth the repeated image that is central to Warhol's aesthetic," said Richard H. Axsom, Senior Curator of Prints and Photographs at the Grand Rapids Art Museum. "Warhol's use of silkscreening reflects his desire to remove himself from the personal aspects of producing his work, to become a machine himself. For Warhol, the reproduced and repeated image reflected and gave expression to contemporary American life."

In Warhol's series, the same photographic image is often repeated in variations of brilliant color and altered form that comment on his subject. Warhol transferred his photographic subjects with silkscreen inks to printing paper or canvas. He completed the prints with additional color inks, the paintings with acrylic media.

Warhol's art can be read from both social and philosophical perspectives. His art powerfully captured the increasing velocity of American life in the last half of the 20th century. In his celebration and critique of fame, politics, and consumer society, he meditates on the transience of life. In all cases, Warhol is deeply American.

"With our new art museum cited in *Newsweek* as one of the world's six best new buildings of 2007 by architecture critic Cathleen McGuigan, we are ready to present an exhibition program of

national and international stature,” stated museum director Celeste Adams. “This unique and focused exhibition includes works never previously lent by the Warhol Museum.”

Rapid Exposure: Warhol in Series will include a variety of educational activities including lectures, film series and weekend family workshops. The Museum Café will feature special menu items and the Museum Store will offer a wide selection of merchandise related to the exhibition.

Educational programs include:

- March 14, 2008: Richard H. Axsom, Senior Curator Grand Rapids Art Museum and curator for *Rapid Exposure: Warhol In Series*, will lecture on the opening day of the exhibition.
- March 16, 2008: Roberta Bernstein, Professor of Art History, SUNY at Albany and friend and assistant to Andy Warhol, will be the featured speaker on Sunday for the opening weekend of the exhibition.
- Weekend film series will feature related work including Ric Burns' *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*.
- Every Saturday morning during the exhibition, ArtVentures for Families will create art projects inspired by the works of Andy Warhol.

Visit the website at www.gramonline.org for an extensive list of related programming and downloadable podcast exhibition tours.

About Andy Warhol

Andy Warhol was born in Pittsburgh, Penn. in 1928. Following graduation from the Carnegie Institute of Technology, Warhol moved to New York where he found steady work as a commercial artist throughout the 1950s. In 1952, the artist had his first individual show at the Hugo Gallery, exhibiting Fifteen Drawings Based on the Writings of Truman Capote. His work was exhibited in several other venues during the 1950s, including his first group show at The Museum of Modern Art in 1956.

The 1960s was an extremely prolific decade for Warhol. Appropriating images from popular culture, Warhol created many paintings that remain icons of 20th-century art, such as the Campbell's Soup Cans, Disasters and Marilyns. In addition to painting, Warhol made several 16mm films which have become underground classics such as *Chelsea Girls*, *Empire* and *Blow Job*. In 1968, Valerie Solanis, founder and sole member of SCUM (Society for Cutting Up Men) walked into Warhol's studio, known as the Factory, and shot the artist. The attack was nearly fatal. Nineteen years later, following routine surgery, Andy Warhol died on February 22, 1987. Firmly established as a major 20th century artist and international celebrity, Warhol's work has been exhibited extensively in museums and galleries around the world.

About the Grand Rapids Art Museum

The mission of the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is to provide a gathering place where people of all ages and backgrounds can enrich their lives through interaction with works of art in a thought-provoking and creative way. Established in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, the new art museum is internationally known for its distinguished design and LEED certified status. Established in 1910 as the Grand Rapids Art Association, GRAM has grown to include more than 5,000 works of art, including American and European 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture and over 3,000 works on paper. Embracing the city's legacy as a leading center of design and manufacturing, GRAM has a growing collection in the area of design and modern craft.

###