

deborah bell

PHOTOGRAPHS

Press Release

ANDY WARHOL'S STREET DIARY: PHOTOGRAPHS 1981-86

September 17-November 13, 2010

Reception Thursday, September 16, 6-8 pm

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Deborah Bell Photographs is pleased to present an exhibition of black-and-white photographs by **Andy Warhol**. Entitled *Andy Warhol's Street Diary: Photographs 1981-86*, the exhibition consists of twenty-five gelatin silver prints made between 1981 and 1986, during the last decade of the artist's life. An illustrated catalogue with introduction by **Jonas Mekas**, the filmmaker and founder of Anthology Film Archives, and Warhol's long-time colleague, will accompany the exhibition.

Warhol began a new period of activity with photography when he was introduced to the miniature Minox EL 35mm camera in 1976 by Thomas Ammann, who was then working for Warhol's Zürich dealer Bruno Bischofberger. Upon this discovery, and for the next ten years, Warhol began to take more photographs outside the studio, using a variety of the new point-and-shoot, auto-focus 35mm cameras, which were lightweight and had built-in flash and exposure meters. Warhol took thousands of pictures with such cameras, continuing the visual diary of his surroundings and travels. Photography had always been a tool in Warhol's work, usually as a means to an end, but in this phase of his career black-and-white photographs became the final product.

The 8 x 10" pictures in this exhibition are not portraits of people but of the endlessly fascinating visual details he recorded daily, especially in the city. They are the less well-known formal studies that reveal Andy's eye: a lively composition of shoes on an outdoor display rack; clothing, pottery and jewelry arranged at the flea market; eccentric posters in store windows; a pleasing jumble of wooden spoons in a kitchen jar; the undulating play of lines and stripes on fabric; a rack of men's ties; reflections; and patterns of shadows and debris on the street. These single prints precede Warhol's stitched, or sewn, composites of photographs, which employ larger (11 x 14") prints.

In his essay for the exhibition catalogue, Jonas Mekas states:

"I always thought Andy was a diarist. A diarist in art is one who is totally open to all possibilities all the time. One who doesn't throw out anything;

everything eventually is used. Andy was recording everything. With a still camera, with a video camera, Polaroid camera, Sony tape recorder, pencil. A diarist's work never ends. He snaps everything all the time. He is an open eye; he is the garbage can into which everything can fall, can be thrown.... I have always argued with the people who have talked about Andy as a voyeur. No, Andy was not a voyeur; Andy was a gazer. He gazed at things, at people, at reality. A very special gaze. There was no pathological obsession in it. It was a very natural state of gazing. Andy was an open eye. He was a looker. You see it in all aspects of his work, in his art. Maybe he was also the most democratic artist at the same time. The diaristic form in art is both the most personal and the most democratic."

An opening reception will be held on Thursday, September 16 from 6-8 pm. The exhibition remains on view through Saturday, November 13, 2010.

Gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday from noon 6pm and by appointment.

Of special note: Anthology Film Archives will present a screening of Warhol's legendary film SLEEP in mid-November. Please visit anthologyfilmarchives.org for show date and time.

For further details and high-res scans please contact us by phone at (212) 691-3883 or by email at deborahbell@rcn.com.

Please also visit our website, www.deborahbellphotographs.com.