

MAPPLETHORPE - WARHOL

Celebrity Portraits

April 22 - May 27, 2006



Marc Selwyn Fine Art is pleased to announce "Mapplethorpe-Warhol, Celebrity Portraits," a major exhibition of photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe and Andy Warhol. The opening reception will take place on Saturday, April 22 from 6-8pm.

There are striking similarities in the ways Warhol and Mapplethorpe approached the photographic image. "Mapplethorpe-Warhol, Celebrity Portraits" is an opportunity to explore the two artists' parallel approaches through a genre which was central to the work of both--portrait photography.

The camera was an essential element in the making of Warhol's silkscreen paintings, and the photograph is well known as the basis for his appropriated Pop Culture images. Nevertheless, the polaroids in this exhibition, taken with the Big Shot camera in the 70's and 80's, were, as Peter Hay Halpert described "unlike his other photographs...these reveal Warhol the photographer to a greater degree than we have recognized. These pieces are entirely Andy's. Warhol's polaroids are a personal statement in a way that none of his other photographs are. They were not constructed at the Factory. Where there is no artistry in the photo-booth pictures (a not undesired aspect), the Polaroids reveal Warhol behind the camera, making choices."

Mapplethorpe, a great admirer of Warhol, also embraced appropriation in his first use of photography. As demonstrated in the exhibition's 1986 portrait of Warhol, he began by appropriating commercially printed imagery, and it was not until the early 1970's that he took his first photographs with a polaroid camera. Like Warhol, Mapplethorpe turned away from the world in which he grew up and became fascinated by the allure of New York City. Both artists enjoyed celebrity status in an audience beyond the art world, and both manipulated their personas as evidenced by the self portraits in drag shown by both artists. While Warhol produced documents of celebrity and glamour, Mapplethorpe focused on the aesthetics of the body and his subjects sexual presence. This exhibition gives us the opportunity to juxtapose the artists' portraits of each other as well as both artists' images of Grace Jones, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Keith Haring, Deborah Harry, Roy Lichtenstein, Francesco Clemente and Truman Capote.