



WADSWORTH ATHENEUM
MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 16, 2015

Media Only: Amanda Young, (860) 838-4082
amanda.young@wadsworthatheneum.org



**Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art Presents First Exhibition to Pair the
Work of Andy Warhol and Robert Mapplethorpe**
*“Warhol & Mapplethorpe: Guise & Dolls,” Examines Issues of Gender and
Identity through Iconic Artists’ Work*

“Warhol & Mapplethorpe: Guise & Dolls”—the first major exhibition to pair the work of renowned artists Andy Warhol and Robert Mapplethorpe—opens Oct. 17, 2015, and runs through Jan. 24, 2016, at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Conn. “Guise & Dolls” showcases approximately 100 paintings, photographs, Polaroids, prints, videos and pieces of ephemera. Patricia Hickson, Emily Hall Tremain Curator of Contemporary Art, organized the exhibition.

Focusing on New York in the 1970s and early 80s, “Guise & Dolls” explores the vibrant and tumultuous era of change through the work of Warhol and Mapplethorpe, both of whose work in portraiture and self-portraiture evoke particular disguises, characters and ambiguous

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art 600 Main Street Hartford, CT 06013 thewadsworth.org

personalities. The exhibition offers a close look at the artists' portraits of each other, self-portraits and a selection of iconic portraits of sitters that address role-playing and gender roles—masculinity, femininity and androgyny. These portraits are presented alongside numerous other works and ephemera that demonstrate the artists' engagement with gender, identity, sexuality, beauty, performance and disguise—subjects that emerged during the lively period of gender fluidity and sexual freedom during the rise of the gay rights movement in the 1970s.

“It is astonishing to think that the works of Andy Warhol and Robert Mapplethorpe—two artists who both created significant bodies of work in self-portraiture—have not been examined together before now,” said Hickson. “We are eager to present these particular bodies of work in portraiture prominently and in conversation with one another, and to shed light on the artists personally and in the context of the times. Many issues they raise are still timely today.”

“Guise & Dolls” focuses on several prominent bodies of work from each artist's oeuvre: Warhol's “Ladies and Gentlemen” series (1975) of drag queen portraits, Christopher Makos's “Altered Images” series of Warhol in drag, Mapplethorpe's photographs of lifelong friend and longtime muse Patti Smith that range from masculine to feminine and Mapplethorpe's photographic series and book, “Lady: Lisa Lyon” (1983) of the female bodybuilding champion in numerous gender-bending guises. Androgynous and cross-dressing subjects, including Bob Colacello, Candy Darling and Grace Jones are also presented.

Both Warhol and Mapplethorpe are embedded in the Wadsworth Atheneum's history. They have both been subjects of the museum's MATRIX solo exhibition series: “Andy Warhol / MATRIX 50” (1979) featured the “Still Life (Hammer and Sickle)” paintings of 1976, and “Robert Mapplethorpe / MATRIX 80” (1984)—curated by former Wadsworth Atheneum curator and Mapplethorpe's lover Sam Wagstaff—presented 20 gelatin silver prints and photogravures of “Flowers” (1983). The Wadsworth Atheneum also participated in the much publicized and controversial touring exhibition, “Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Moment” (1989). In 1999, the museum organized the exhibition, “About Face: Andy Warhol Portraits,” which traveled to the Miami Art Museum in 2000.

Exhibition Programs

An exhibition gallery talk with Hickson will be held at noon, Thursday, Oct. 29, followed by a 1 p.m. screening of, “Superstar: The Life and Times of Andy Warhol” (1990, 87 min). This program is free with museum admission. Wednesday, Nov. 4, 6:30 p.m. the museum will

present, “Conversation: Working with Andy Warhol,” a conversation between Christopher Makos, artist and collaborator on the “Altered Image” series; Bob Colacello, former editor of Warhol’s Interview magazine and author of “Holy Terror: Andy Warhol Close Up;” and Vincent Fremont, Vice President and Executive Manager of the Andy Warhol Studio and a founding director of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. Makos, Colacello and Fremont will share their personal stories and discuss their professional relationships with Andy Warhol. This program is free and open to the public and is followed by a book and catalogue signing. From 5 – 6:30 p.m. guests are welcome to view the “Guise & Dolls” exhibition and enjoy a reception. A January 2016 lecture with exhibition catalogue contributor Jonathan D. Katz is also being planned.

Publication

A fully illustrated, 184-page catalogue, edited by Hickson and printed by Yale University Press, is the first scholarly in-depth analysis relating these two important artists and gender politics. Essays by Hickson, Jonathan D. Katz, Tirza True Latimer, Vincent Fremont, Eileen Myles and Christopher Makos, as well as an interview by Maria Luisa Pacelli, trace the convergences and divergences of Warhol and Mapplethorpe’s work, and examine the historical context of the artists’ projects as well as their lasting impact on contemporary art and queer culture. Firsthand accounts by the artists’ collaborators and subjects reveal details into the making and exhibition of some of the works presented here. With an illustrated timeline highlighting key moments in the artists’ careers, and more than 90 color plates of their arresting pictures, this book provides a fascinating study of two of the most compelling figures in 20th century art. The book is sold through the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum Shop at www.wadsworthshop.org for \$35 softcover.

Exhibition Credit

Generous support for “Warhol & Mapplethorpe: Guise & Dolls” comes from The Saunders Foundation, The Brant Foundation, Inc., The John Burton Harter Charitable Trust, Larsen Photography Fund, Morris Joseloff Exhibition Fund, The William O. and Carole P. Bailey Exhibition Fund, Howard and Bush Foundation Publication Fund, The Maximilian E. & Marion O. Hoffman Foundation, Inc., Macy’s, Anonymous, Duff Ashmead and Eric Ort, Emilie and Raul de Brigard, The Cheryl Chase and Stuart Bear Family Foundation, David and Mary Dangremond, Henry and Sharon Martin, Sotheby’s, Linda Cheverton Wick and Walter Wick,

Samuel R. and Martha Peterson, Laura R. Harris, Louis Wiley, Jr., Jay Morton and Mike Phillips, Susan and Joel Rottner, The Lyman B. Brainerd Family Foundation Fund, Lee. G. Kuckro, Tim's Used Books—Provincetown, Sharon W. and Robert H. Smith, Jr., and John Rimscha. Additional support comes from Jeffrey G. Marsted and Marcia Reid Marsted and the Contemporary Coalition of the Wadsworth Atheneum.

About the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Founded in 1842, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art is the oldest public art museum in the United States. The museum's nearly 50,000 works of art span 5,000 years, from Greek and Roman antiquities to the first museum collection of American contemporary art. The museum's five connected buildings—representing architectural styles from Gothic Revival to modern International Style—are located at 600 Main Street in Hartford, Connecticut. Since 2010 the museum has been undergoing a major, \$33 million renovation, and will celebrate a Grand Reopening Sept. 19, 2015. Hours: Wed – Fri: 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Sat & Sun: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; First Thursdays: 11 a.m. – 8 p.m. Admission: \$5 – 10; discounts for members, students and seniors. Free admission Wed – Fri, 4 – 5 p.m. except First Thursdays. Public phone: (860) 278-2670; website: <http://thewadsworth.org>.

###

Note to editors: select high-resolution publicity images for “Warhol & Mapplethorpe: Guise & Dolls” are available for download at <http://press.thewadsworth.org>. Please email media@wadsworthatheneum.org for permission and a password.