

GRADE 5



Campbell's Soup, 1968
(Wikipedia)

ANDY WARHOL (ca. 1925-1930 to 1987)

American Pop artist

Warhol (originally Warhola) was born in Pennsylvania and his working life was mostly spent in New York City. He is mostly known for being the father of the American Pop Art Movement. His work incorporated iconography produced through commercial art and pre-existing photographs of celebrities: Campbell's soup cans, Brillo pad boxes, images of Marilyn Monroe and Jackie Kennedy.

Born: between 1925-1930 (date unsure); outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Spent most of his working life in: New York City

Died: 1987; New York City

Known for: being the father of the American Pop Art Movement and for creating large graphic works



Andy Warhol, 1977 (Wikipedia)

Biographical Summary: Born into poverty of immigrant parents, this boy of delicate constitution managed to graduate from Pittsburgh Carnegie Institute. He spent the rest of his life in New York City, first as a commercial artist for such houses as Vogue and Bonwit Teller, then as an independent artist. His art shocked people who resented his subject matter and style for being outright thievery from the everyday world of commercial art. But his giant soup cans and Brillo boxes and movie stars eventually led to Warhol being hailed as the father of the American Pop Art Movement.



Mao, Andy Warhol, 1972
(Flickr, andydoro)

Andy Warhol, Pop Artist

Andy Warhol was born into poverty sometime between 1925 and 1930. The exact year is not known because after Warhol became famous, he made a game of the facts of his life as a way of making himself and his art mysterious and more intriguing. His father mined coal and died after a long illness from drinking poisoned water. Andy had to sell apples to help out his mother and two brothers. Andy reports he had three nervous breakdowns before he was ten, but he did graduate from high school. A picture shows him as a slightly dreamy-looking pretty blond boy.

He went to art school at the Carnegie Institute in his home state of Pennsylvania, and he worked summers selling shoes in a local department store. In the store he came into contact with what was to become his world of art, the world of consumer advertising.

He earned his degree and went to New York City. There he got a job working as a commercial artist for Vogue and Harper's Bazaar. He created an original window-dressing for the famous Bonwit Teller department store. He did advertisement drawings for shoe manufacturer I. Miller. One day he came to work with a brown paper bag full of 50 shoe drawings. They were turned down by his employer, but he went home and used them to produce the first art for which he was noticed, a series of decorative boots and shoes designed for, and titled after, movie stars.

Warhol's success came quickly because, in the early 60s when abstract art was the accepted style, people were shocked that he dared to make exact copies of such things as soup cans and soap packages and call it art. These were images of ordinary things from the commercial world and he was calling it HIS art! He lifted pictures straight out of magazines and newspapers to use in his art. He even had assistants do most of his art! Other young artists became intrigued with this most radical of ideas, and soon this new art form was recognized as the Pop Art Movement.

Andy Warhol, father of Pop Art, changed his style periodically. He created artwork using silk screen processes done by commercial printers and called them paintings. Andy also explored ideas with music on film; he published a magazine; he experimented in sculpture with glued-together paintings; and he did videotape production. He became a collector of art and "artistic junk" from jewelry to old cars.

During the 70s and 80s his work was exhibited worldwide, as well as in America. He had many commissions for portraits of wealthy customers. Many of his fans loved him for his extravagant personal and artistic eccentricities. He had become a star among stars.

He never married, but lived with his mother and his cats. In 1987 when he was in his late 50s, Andy Warhol died as a result of surgery.

Everyone will be famous for 15 minutes.

Andy Warhol



Dollar Sign, 1981
(Wikipedia)