

PRESS RELEASE

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Sigmar Polke / Andy Warhol
Drawings, 1962–65

McCaffrey Fine Art, New York
October 26–December 2, 2006

Exhibition hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10 A.M.–6 P.M.

McCaffrey Fine Art is extremely happy to present an exhibition bringing together the enormously influential drawings of Sigmar Polke and Andy Warhol made between 1962 and 1965. While revealing similar aspects in their approach to popular culture, this juxtaposition of works of art by Polke and Warhol also illustrates the radically different postwar cultures, artistic means, and conceptual strategies of the two artists working somewhat in parallel on either side of the Atlantic.

Polke (b. 1941) came to the West from the food shortages and deprivation of the East in 1953. Memories of this time, combined with his early encounters with West German popular culture, resonate in the drawings he made a decade later, all of which are thoroughly infused with his savage sense of humor. Being artworks from the no-man's-land of Capitalist Realism, heroically workaday grocery store items of no conceivable glamour—shoe polish, sausages, bread rolls—and expressions of petit bourgeois longings—foreign travel, handbags, fashionable shoes—receive equal attention, and they are sketched with a spontaneous directness of vision and economy of means. Though mediated through newspapers and magazines, these groundbreaking drawings convey the 1960s zeitgeist in a way that is simultaneously poignant, heartfelt, and mocking.

Meanwhile, Warhol (1928–87), the already successful graphic artist, began his quest to become a fine-art artist about 1960. At the moment of breakthrough in 1962, while the subject matter of his commercial and fine art remained virtually constant, the folksy wholesomeness of his early hand-rendered drawings gave way to meticulous works of exactitude and proto-mechanization, drawn from photography and print media. Responding to the wealth and abundance of stimulation in popular culture, Warhol used his fine draftsmanship to convey a new world of Hollywood glamour, corporate brand names, and dollar bills, rendered with clinically brash materialism that made art icons of them all.

McCaffrey Fine Art's exhibition will feature a total of twenty-five works by the two artists, borrowed from Museum Frieder Burda, Baden-Baden; the Sonnabend Collection, New York; the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, New York; and several private collections. A full-color catalogue with text by Magdalena Dabrowski, Curator of 20th-Century Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, will accompany the exhibition.

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