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# N is for NIGHTLIFE

Andy Warhol loved parties. He was invited to many in New York, London, and Paris, and went to more elsewhere during his travels. Whether celebrating a birthday, a new exhibition, a book, a fashion line, or a dance or theater company, a party was happening somewhere seemingly every night, and he went to at least one on most nights. Parties in New York were said to take on a special mood when he was there: he was so identified with New York's nightlife that no party started until Warhol arrived. He entwined these celebrations with the prosperity of his fortunes. He nearly always went out with a close associate from his studio whose role was initially to entertain and chat up existing clients, or to engage with likely prospects for a portrait commission, or to meet current and rising stars for a feature in *Interview*, which might also lead to being a guest on *Andy Warhol's Fifteen Minutes* television show, or to a portrait or another venture. This strategy gave Warhol time to catch up with old friends before briefly stopping by to meet the new prospects and help seal a deal.

By the late 1970s, keeping track of this busy schedule was accomplished in part by maintaining large journals, one book for daytime events (often including lunches that

the Warhol Studio was hosting for a client) and a separate book for evening appointments. Warhol received invitations in the mail to most parties, and those he expected to attend were stapled into the journal, often covering other stapled invitations and more that had been received by telephone and written onto the page. Warhol was invited to a wide variety of cultural events, and the number of invitations makes the journals physically impossible to close. Warhol was unable to attend every party to which he was invited, and the invitations for those he decided not to attend were placed into his *Time Capsules*; perhaps he wanted to have a reminder of the event even though he wasn't going, just to know that it was happening and that some of his friends might be going. He may have wanted to keep a record of missed events, as they could be important in the near future. To stay informed and up-to-date, he would need to know who attended, and with whom, and what they wore, and what they said. Because of his endless curiosity, the museum now has a great paper record of parties and other events, both those he had an interest in and those he did not. Often the journals can be cross-referenced against Warhol's published *Diaries* for his

perspective on the parties he attended and who accompanied him, but not always. For example, many of the exciting events in his 1982 journal are not discussed in the *Diaries*, leaving us to imagine what might have occurred.

The night planner from 1982 is crammed with assorted invitations ranging from concerts and performances to teas and gala dinners. Warhol was asked to a concert by the British rock band Duran Duran at midnight on July 2 at the Peppermint Lounge. Nick Rhodes, keyboardist and founding member of the band, visited the museum years later and shared how important Warhol had been to the band's early success and how generous he was to them. Objects and photographs in the Archive document this friendship.

Later that month, Warhol was invited to the Broadway musical *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* on July 22. This run of the popular bawdy musical closed two nights later. The movie version with Dolly Parton had its US premiere on July 23, but Warhol's journal doesn't specify whether it was the stage or screen version to which he was invited. Warhol created a portrait of Parton in 1985, and she is mentioned numerous times in his *Diaries*. On July 23, Earl Blackwell

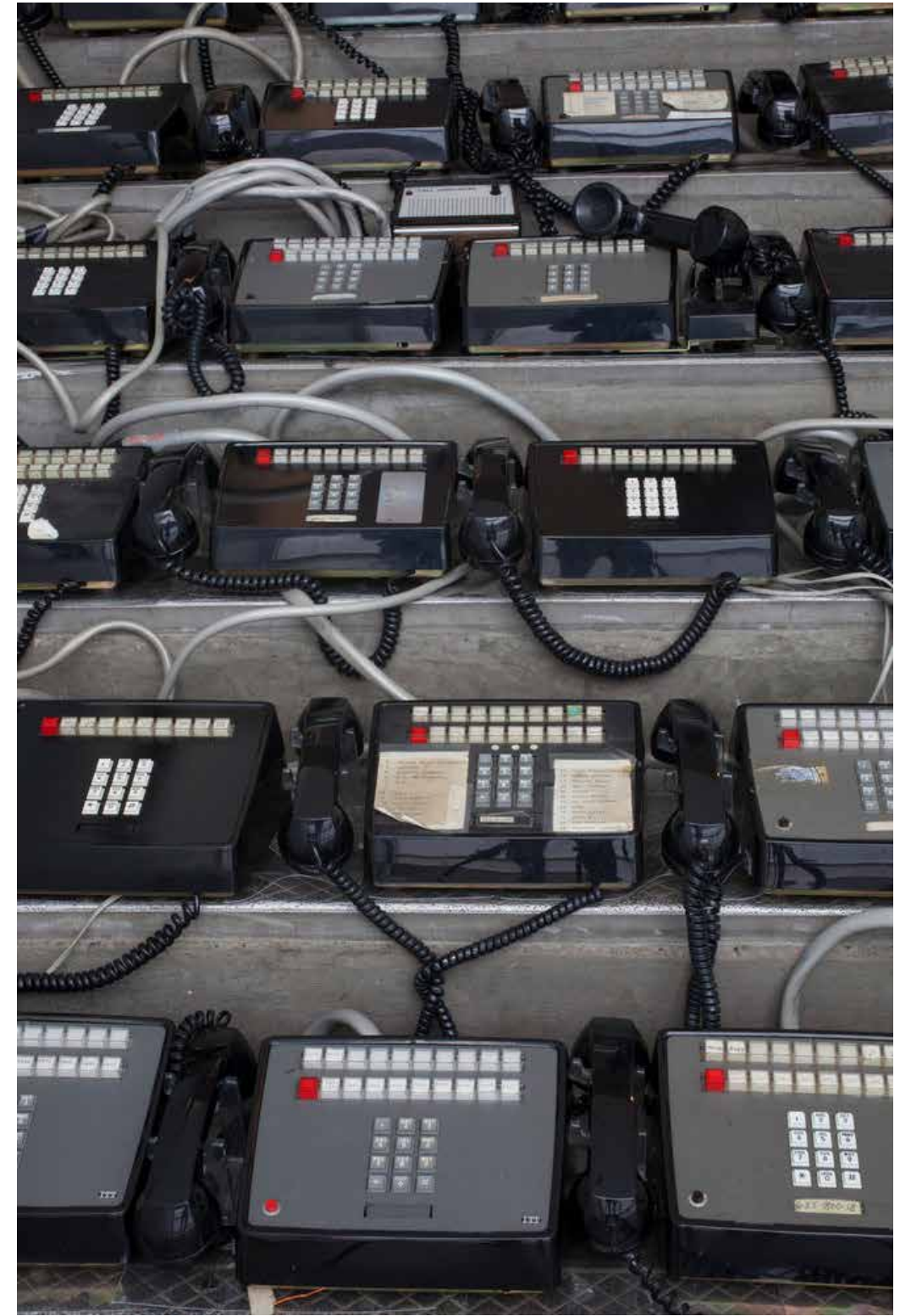


This chapter was created from newly catalogued archival materials relating to [Warhol's social life](#).





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measuring over 6 feet square, and have a haunting quality from the compositional use of dense black. Each work centers on a levitating head surrounded by spiky hair and patterned with colorful camouflage. In Warhol's hands, camouflage references the military art of concealment but also reflects his personal need for cover. About earlier works, Warhol explained, "When I did my self-portrait, I left all the pimples out because you always should. Pimples are a temporary condition and they don't have anything to do with what you really look like. Always omit the blemishes—they're not part of the good picture you want."<sup>4</sup> After a lifetime of skin treatments, hairpieces, and "gluing himself

together," Warhol's masquerade was his only form of exposure.<sup>5</sup>

NOTES

1. Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 63–64.
2. Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *POPism: The Warhol Sixties* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), 250–51.
3. Warhol, *Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, 54–55.
4. *Ibid.*, 62.
5. Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, eds., *The Andy Warhol Diaries* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 1989), xvii.









groundbreaking PBS program *An American Family*, the first reality TV show. Viewers saw Loud's parents' marriage disintegrate and witnessed Lance come out as gay. He later had a successful career as a journalist.

### Art and Stamps

Warhol's art collection contained little-known works related to the post, including an untitled wall filled with hundreds of tiny blue portraits of George Washington that were carefully cut from cancelled stamps by Johnny Dodd in the 1960s. Dodd was a theatrical lighting designer for small stage productions in New York at that time. He was a friend of Billy Name, the lighting designer who decorated Warhol's Silver Factory. Like many members of Warhol's entourage in those years, Dodd was an amphetamine addict and used the energy from his experiences with speed to create this obsessive work.

Stamps are a Pop subject represented in Warhol's oeuvre. In 1962 he created a series of paintings using a hand-carved rubber stamp based upon an actual airmail stamp at the time. He printed the canvas with irregular grids. The rubber stamps used for these works and for *Red Air Mail Stamp* (1962) are in the Archive. In 1979 he created a print designed for the first-day cover of a United Nations stamp. This work was commissioned to raise funds to support the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization. Buyers of the print also received a cachet, or first-day cover envelope, printed with a miniature reproduction of this work, along with the newly issued postage stamps. Papers related to this project include a letter dated January 26, 1979, from Annabelle Wiener, director of the World Federation of United Nations Associations, thanking Warhol for his design and inviting him to a luncheon at the Interpex philatelist convention to celebrate his work for the United Nations.

The typical stamp collector prizes the uncancelled sleeve of stamps such as those given out at the philatelist convention. Warhol's own "stamp collection" (as he thought of it), however, consists of thousands of cancelled stamps from all over the world, carefully ripped from the original envelopes and saved in manila envelopes. These collections are sprinkled throughout the *Time Capsules*.

### Warhol Honored with Stamps

Beginning in March 1987—a month after Warhol's death—Michel Hosszú, a Hungarian artist working in France who makes his own postage stamps, designed and published "bootleg" Warhol postage stamps, which he apparently used on his correspondence for a year. The stamps were featured on an envelope addressed to Warhol's executor, Fred Hughes, containing a letter from Hosszú describing his project and a letter from his art dealer to Hughes. A framed set of six of these artist's illegal stamps are in the Archive. These Warhol stamps, like all of Hosszú's work, are hand-printed, as the off-register printing attests. In a common error, probably due to Warhol's own misinformation, Hosszú incorrectly identifies Warhol's date of birth as 1930, rather than 1928.

On August 9, 2002, the US Postal Service released an official Andy Warhol first-class postage stamp. The design for the stamp is a self-portrait painting by Warhol from the museum's collection that was based on a photobooth photograph. The postage stamp is slightly smaller than the original photograph.

#### NOTES

1. Beard has lived on Hog Ranch since 1962. His move to Africa and his life's work are inspired by the work of the Danish author Karen Blixen (Isak Dinesen), best known for *Out of Africa*. Beard's experiences hunting crocodiles in the name of science led to his later environmentalism, protesting a massive die-off of elephants in Kenya's Tsavo National Park.

Additional research for this chapter was provided by Erin Byrne. Photographic layouts designed by Becky Shock.



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