



ART

An Old-School New York Art- World Rivalry Makes a Comeback with Andy Warhol and John Ashbery Exhibits

Ashbery, the poet who died last year, had a vast collection of New York School art, now on display at the Kasmin Gallery, just a few blocks up from the Whitney's blockbuster Warhol exhibit.

by H.W. VAIL

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The Surprising Reasons Meghan Markle and Prince Charles Have Bonded

BY JOSH DUBOFF



Everything Meghan Markle Wore on Her South Pacific Tour

BY KATEY RICH



“**S**even Artists on the Warhol Influence.” “Show Us Your Warhol!” “Think You Know Andy Warhol? Here Are Five Truths That May Surprise.”

These three headlines, splashed across the arts section of Thursday’s *New York Times*, prove the art world is currently experiencing a Halloween miracle: Andy Warhol is back from the grave.

Or at least, the Whitney Museum is attempting the next-best thing, with a highly anticipated retrospective: “Andy Warhol—From A to B and Back Again,” which has contributed to a dramatic resurgence of Pop in the international art scene. The Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris recently opened its blockbuster Basquiat and Schiele exhibits, while in New York, galleries and organizations such as the Dia Art Foundation have been trotting out their own Warhol collections, anticipating the attendant spike in demand (and value) that comes with such a major retrospective.

But there’s another midcentury icon back on the scene this fall, offering collectors an opportunity to acquire some art that embraces nostalgia but dispenses with Warhol’s



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Ashbery is best known for his poems, but he was also a revered art critic and collector, and throughout the 60s and 70s became an integral member of the bohemian, hyperintellectual set of artists and poets collectively referred to as the New York School. Ashbery was a fixture in this urbane, multi-lingual scene, whose members often congregated at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery on Manhattan's Lower East Side and included poets Frank O'Hara and Kenneth Koch, as well as expressionists such as Jane Freilicher, Fairfield Porter, and Larry Rivers. Works by Freilicher, Porter, and Rivers—who would often gift paintings to Ashbery to thank him for positive reviews—have made their way into Kasmin's show. Helen Frankenthaler gifted him a painting as well, and it now hangs in the show, though at one point she had awkwardly tried to buy it back.



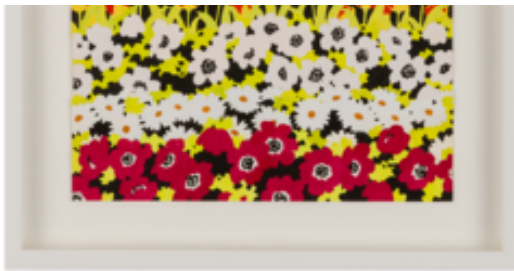
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Clockwise from right; by Joe Brainard, Garden IV, 1969, ©2018 Estate of John Ashbery. Courtesy of Kasmin Gallery, by Joe Brainard, Untitled (The Avant-garde), 1968, ©2018 Estate of John Ashbery. Courtesy of Kasmin Gallery, Alex Katz, Rose, 1966, ©2018 Estate of John Ashbery. ©2018 Alex Katz/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Courtesy of Kasmin Gallery, by Fairfield Porter, John Ashbery (Argyle Socks), 1952 ©2018 The Estate of Fairfield Porter/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Courtesy of Kasmin Gallery. Courtesy of Kasmin Gallery.

“Almost all the works in the show were given to John,” said **Eric Brown**, who curated the Kasmin show. “They were all his friends, and in the old days, people reviewed shows of their friends. It was a very small art world, and more often than not, they knew a lot of the people, because it was a small community.”

The 29 for-sale works all, until very recently, hung in either the Chelsea apartment Ashbery shared with his husband, **David Kermani**, or his house in Hudson, New



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DE COLLEGA & DE, SAID BROWN WHICH ASKED ABOUT THE NEW YORK SCHOOL'S RELATIONSHIP with its Pop-artist contemporaries. "There was Allen Ginsberg and the Beat poets. There was the New York School of John [Ashbery], [Frank] O'Hara, and Jane Freilicher. And then, there were the Pop artists a little bit later. And there's this feeling that they didn't like each other and didn't mix. There were a lot of artists in John's circle who, I think, didn't like Pop art viscerally."

But, Brown explained, there was a mutual acknowledgment, if not respect, between the rival groups. "I think, for Warhol . . . I don't know that [Ashbery] was a big fan. He didn't review him, obviously . . . but I think he could appreciate where he was coming from more than anything. Andy Warhol also commissioned Fairfield Porter to do a painting of himself and his boyfriend at the time. The Whitney now owns it."

Porter painted a portrait of Ashbery as well, and the resulting work seems to betray a psychological (and perhaps romantic) tension between painter and sitter. "Fairfield Porter was married to Anne for many years, and was bisexual, although it wasn't known at the time," Brown explained. "I think he really had certain feelings toward John. There's a certain psychological pull to this painting, I think, that other portraits that Porter painted of other people don't have."

Those with the means to purchase one of Ashbery's pieces of literary and artistic history need not feel any buyer's remorse—in a final act of devotion to the arts, Ashbery mandated that the proceeds of the collection go entirely to supporting experimental artists in all disciplines. "It's kind of John's legacy," Brown said. "This is what he wanted."

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