

i-D

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A new exhibition in New York showcases Andy Warhol's rarely seen photography
'Andy Warhol Photography: 1967–1987' at the Jack Shainman Gallery reveals a more serious side of the famous Pop artist.



Imagery via Jack Shainman Gallery

If someone mentions [Andy Warhol](#), the name likely brings to mind paintings of tinned soup cans, or lurid screen-prints of Marilyn Monroe; the bright, slightly garish commercialism of Pop Art. You probably don't think of austere black-and-white photography, portraiture and nudes. But a new exhibition, '[Andy Warhol Photography: 1967–1987](#)', now showing at the Jack Shainman Gallery in New York, offers a glimpse into a previously lesser-known side of the artist's work.

The Chelsea-based gallery is hosting the first ever comprehensive exhibition of Warhol's photography between the years of 1967 to 1987 (the year of his death), during which time he took hundreds of thousands of photographs. Although it might not be the form we most associate with him, photography played a significant role in Warhol's career.

As a child, Andy was a keen collector of photographs of Hollywood starlets -- it's clear how this obsession with glamour influenced his later work, not to mention his social life, and his intense platonic relationships with beautiful women. The colourful silk-screened paintings and prints which launched his career all began with pre-existing photographs, whether these were of Marilyn Monroe or Mao Zedong.

Despite his reputation as a socialite, Warhol was actually a painfully shy and introverted person. He took his camera with him everywhere, and used photography as a way of interacting with the world which didn't involve actually, well, interacting with it. As gallerist Jack Shainman says, Warhol used photography as a "tool for both engaging with his subjects, as well as a distancing mechanism."



Photography also became for him a kind of diary, a way to mark the passing of time. As such, he was an extremely prolific photographer, but the majority of the photographs he took were never even *printed*, let alone exhibited. The 193 photographs which comprise this new exhibition have, for the most part, never been displayed before, which means they offer a fresh perspective on an artist whose work is iconic, so ubiquitous, that it can end up looking like a parody of itself.

For Warhol fans in the UK, the good news is that another major retrospective of Andy Warhol's work is due this year. '[Andy Warhol](#)' opens at Tate Modern, London on 12 March and will feature a mixture of well-known classics (lovers of Campbell's Soup will not be disappointed) and lesser-known works, such as the *Ladies and Gentlemen*, a portrait series of black and latinx drag queens and trans women, which is being shown for the first time in 30 years.