



**Andy Warhol** grew up in a working class neighborhood of Pittsburgh. He was a prolific artist working in many media, and his work influenced the ways art has been made and perceived ever since his rows of Campbell's Soup paintings were first exhibited in 1962.

Warhol graduated in 1949 with a Fine Arts degree from Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh, where he trained as an art designer. The skills and strategies he learned there would later provide him with an innovative approach to art. He

moved to New York and achieved immediate success as an advertising illustrator and commercial artist for magazines and newspapers.

Warhol's early paintings of the 1960s are among the first examples of American Pop art. The detached ambivalence of his work and its banal content shocked and offended the sensibilities of an elite art audience. He challenged traditional notions of art by mechanically repeating a single image, mimicking the manufacturing industry and parodying mass consumption.

The work of Andy Warhol has been read as a critical assault on the pretensions and traditional concepts of high culture. Warhol, however, was deliberately unclear as to the meaning of his work and always gave the appearance of indifference and ambivalence. With a wry, deadpan delivery, he denied any link to socio-political commentary. Warhol's images have become the icons of a particular age in American cultural history typified by the advent of mass marketing, television, news media and the celebrity commodity. In his world, he declared, everyone could be famous for 15 minutes.