

The Villager

Elegant and Contemporary: National Arts Club Exhibits Andy Warhol and Marc Mellon

By Tequila Minsky

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Warhol's iconic Campbell's soup (1969)—screenprints on paper. This famous appropriation from consumer culture launched Warhol's career.

Photo by Tequila Minsky

The only way to describe The National Club Arts Club at 15 Gramercy South is elegant. Home to artists and patrons since philanthropist and financier Spencer Trask acquired the historic Samuel Tilden Mansion for NAC in 1906, the stately townhouse boasts landmark designations, from New York City in 1966, and a national designation in 1976.

The 1840s building had been the home (with quite a design and architecture history) of former New York Governor Samuel Tilden who lived there from 1863 until his death in 1886.

Steps up from the marble lobby, visitors enter the renovated and restored—now airy and bright—Grand Gallery. With this season's *Andy Warhol Portfolios: A Life in Pop*, The National Arts Club inaugurates its new galleries; the exhibition will continue until Nov. 4. Over 80 pieces are spread over two floors of the landmark building.



Marilyn Monroe. Warhol used a cropped publicity still from film *Niagra* (1953, Gene Kormon photographer), the source for over 50 paintings and dozens of prints.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)

Featuring selections from Andy Warhol's forty-year span of work of photographic silkscreen printmaking, many of the works reflect Warhol's decades-long process of mirroring popular American culture. Collage, drawing, diamond dust and color variation are among Warhol's vast array of techniques. Pieces exhibited are from the Bank of America collection.

Included in the show are works from his *Muhammad Ali* series (1978), *Flowers* (1970), and *Campbell's Soup* (1969). Ten screenprints from *Myths* (1981) depict Uncle Sam and Superman and range to Greta Garbo and Dracula. One of his *Marilyn Monroe* prints (1967) is in the show.



Flowers, 1970—in the long-tradition of floral still life painting.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)

Also exhibited are lesser known earlier works, *Hand-Colored Flowers (Ikebana Prints, 1974)*. Individually hand-colored with watercolor dyes, Warhol used photos from books on flower arranging as source material. He took formal elements of line and structure created by leaves and branches with few blooms in the style of Ikebana arrangements.



These lesser known drawings, 1974, hand-colored Ikebana Prints were inspired by Japanese flower arrangements.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)

While NAC is a membership club (a right turn from reception takes you the member's bar, dining area and the formal parlor seating areas), NAC is committed to engagement with the community and hosts a slew of public events.

Marc Mellon Globe Changers and the Sculptures of the Sublime

The NAC's fall season follows the theme of "NAC Next: A Season of Innovation" of more than 50 programs open to the public is focusing on new works and interpretations of classics in the worlds of art, music, dance, theater and beyond. This reawakening of arts in the City includes lectures, conversations and performances, all free of charge, with support from Amazon.

Opening Oct. 11 until Nov. 6 is an extensive bronze sculpture exhibition *Globe Changers and Sculpture of the Sublime* by one of NAC's long time members, Marc Mellon.



With Albert Einstein, sculptor Marc Mellon.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)

Mellon's new sculptures unveiled include the mid-scale model for his recently dedicated statue of Jackie Robinson and George Shuba. Portrait busts of other Globe Changers—Jackie Robinson, Albert Einstein and Elie Wiesel are among his ongoing series of busts of individuals of global significance, each speak to the challenges to our planet. Many pieces completed during the Pandemic, Mellon comments on his work, "A small contributor to a counter-narrative that speaks to a saner and more just future."

The exhibit also includes works from Mellon's *Sculpture of the Sublime* series, bronzes created in collaboration with elite ABT dancers, and new bronzes from Mellon's *pas de deux dance* sculptures.

The National Arts Club is also part of Open House New York Weekend—this coming weekend. NAC is offering the public to step inside the historic landmark building for a tour that starts at 11 am. Saturday, Oct. 16. Reservations required.

<https://ohny.org/place/national-arts-club>.



One of the parlor rooms in the elegant building. The sculpture "Journey" is by Marc Mellon whose exhibition opened Oct.11 and runs through November 6.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)



From Marc Mellon's pas de deux sculptures.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)



Sculptor Marc Mellon with his bust of Jackie Robinson.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)



Jackie Robinson.



Myths: Greta Garbo as Mata Hari, Dracula, The Shadow (Andy Warhol), and The Witch.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)



Ten of Warhol's 1969 Campbell's soup screenprints. These appropriations from consumer culture launched his career.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)



From the Myth series that includes here: Micky Mouse, Howdy Doody, Superman and Mommy, The Shadow (self portrait), The Star, The Witch, Dracula and Santa Claus and Uncle Sam.

(Photo by Tequila Minsky)

