

I'll Be Your Mirror



University Art Museum
Collections Study Gallery

August 24 –
December 11, 2021

I'll Be Your Mirror

The Collections Study Gallery's inaugural exhibition *I'll Be Your Mirror* asks who we are, who we aspire to be, and what we hide or reveal. These questions are explored through iconic celebrity portraits, anonymous portraits, abstract painting, sculpture, and video.

What we feel safe revealing depends on the responses of others. From our time as infants smiling at our caretakers as they smile back, throughout our relationship with each other as adults, we discover who we are and who we can be through the responsive, affirming mirroring of others.

In our private moments before the mirror in a bathroom or bedroom, we may become introspective, while simultaneously imagining how we'll be seen by others in public spaces—not unlike acting. Thus, viewing the portraits of actors and performers in this exhibition, we begin to ask in what ways an onstage persona might reflect a part of oneself that one is unable to show in everyday life.

The fear of revealing too much resonates with a sense of vulnerability present in so much of the work here, often made visible through gestures, traces, and body language. The exhibition title comes from a lyric by The Velvet Underground & Nico, "I'll be your mirror / Reflect what you are, in case you don't know," in which the singer offers to reflect and to amplify the beauty she sees in someone who cannot see it in themselves. Looking beyond the glass and metal object that hangs on the wall, the mirror embodied in this exhibition reflects the vulnerabilities we feel in isolation and the security that can come when we respond to them together.

Cover: Andreas Feininger, *Woman holding miniature camera*, 1949, gelatin silver print, 11 x 14 inches, collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York, on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation, gift of the estate of Gertrud Feininger

Following page: Andy Warhol, *Unidentified Woman (Gold Blouse)*, October 1984, 12 Polacolor ERs, 4 x 3 3/8 inches, collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York, on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation, gift of © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.



About the Artists

ANDREAS FEININGER (b. 1906, Paris, France; d. 1999, New York, New York) was a prolific photographer known for his dynamic black-and-white cityscapes of Manhattan and as a staff photographer for LIFE magazine (1943–62). *I'll Be Your Mirror* displays photographs of sitters pointing their now-vintage cameras directly at his camera, reflecting their own time and also mirroring our contemporary era of selfie culture.

KATRIA FOSTER's (b. 1983, Boise, Idaho) photographs explore the physical and emotional spaces occupied by domestic life through individual and cultural female perspectives. *Domestic Affair 6* (2017) displays the intimacy and quiet of a softly illuminated washroom. An obscured figure grasps at a shower curtain, mirroring the gesture of Dave McKenzie's arm in *Drawing After Andy* (2001).

RACHEL FOULLON's (b. 1978, Glendale, California) sculpture and installations are composed of reconfigured materials and objects associated with manual and domestic labor. *Washboard* (2012) demonstrates her engagement with twentieth-century vernacular and agrarian life and its relationship to shifting cultural contexts. Combining and reshaping found objects such as washboard, canvas, and mirror, Foullon is quite literally reflecting the self back at the viewer, contemplating the construction of identity through abstract form.

JENNY KEMP (b. 1979, Sheboygan, Wisconsin) meticulously layers hand-painted, biologically inspired abstractions, resulting in dense and intricate paintings that serve to represent unseen phenomena in the natural world. Through measured and slowly shifting hue gradations, her paintings become flat and digital, almost screenlike in nature.

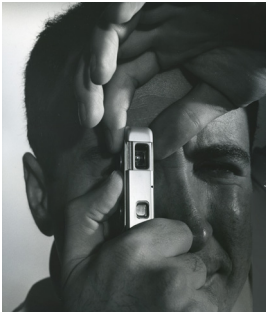
MARY ELLEN MARK (b. 1940, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; d. 2015, New York, New York) documented marginalized people and communities for over four decades, primarily working in black-and-white photography. Mark humanized a less familiar America, and her powerful, contextual images insist on a specific place and environment that shapes one's identity. Many of her photographs, such as *Old women in black, Las Vegas 4/1991* (1991), reflect her capacity for compassionate storytelling and a sensitive conveyance of the subject's interior lives.

DAVE MCKENZIE (b. 1977, Kingston, Jamaica) is known for his multidisciplinary performances, sculptures, and videos. He is a keen observer of the ways in which larger truths are embedded in words and images from everyday life. *Drawing with Andy*, a 2001 video, captures the artist tracing the contours of an Andy Warhol portrait of Elizabeth Taylor on a steamy glass shower wall, an intimate space for reflecting on the artist's own identity within the art world.

EDWARD STEICHEN (b. 1879, Bivange, Luxembourg; d. 1973, West Redding, Connecticut) is considered a prominent figure of nineteenth-century portraiture, a pioneer of fashion photography, and a founding member of the Photo-Secession, which promoted photography as an art form. Steichen incorporated Pictorialism into his photographs, exploring tonality and composition. He utilized elements of painting, including Surrealism and geometric abstraction. Steichen created classic portraits of actors, including the world-renowned singer, actor, and political activist *Paul Robeson as Emperor Jones* (1933) from Eugene O'Neill's play "Emperor Jones," which was adapted to film that same year.

ANDY WARHOL (b. 1928, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; d. 1987, New York, New York) the renowned pop artist's love affair with Polaroids as well as black-and-white photography began in 1976, when he picked up an easy-to-use Minox 35 EL camera. It became his constant companion until his death at age fifty-eight. In keeping with his obsessive nature, Warhol made between 60,000 and 100,000 snapshots and Polaroids in his lifetime. By turning an indiscriminate camera on all that he saw, Warhol managed to make his subjects appear both ordinary and fabulous at the same time, as seen here in the Polaroid of Jackie Curtis, whose gender-performing acting career began in East Village drag; in the offset lithograph of Jackie Kennedy at her husband's funeral; and in a series of Polaroids of an unknown woman in gold.

Exhibition Checklist



Andreas Feininger
A photographer with a Minox, 1949
Gelatin silver print
11 x 14 inches
Collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York, on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
Gift of the estate of Gertrud Feininger



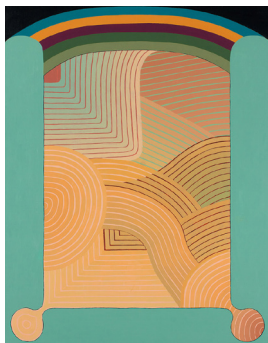
Andreas Feininger
Woman holding miniature camera, 1949
Gelatin silver print
11 x 14 inches
Collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York, on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
Gift of the estate of Gertrud Feininger



Katria Foster
Domestic Affair 6, 2017
UltraChrome print
28 x 18 inches
Collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
Purchase of University at Albany Alumni Association Dr. Arthur N. Collins '48
Purchase Award



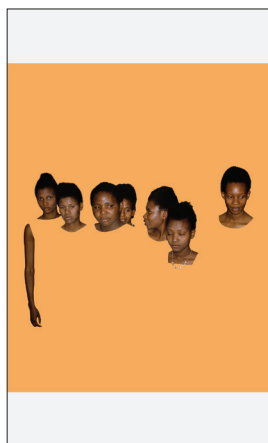
Rachel Foullon
Washboard, 2012
Antique washboard, polished nickel plates, brass, dyed canvas, and hardware
20 x 20 inches
Collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
Gift of anonymous



Jenny Kemp
Screen Time, 2020
 Acrylic and linen over panel
 25 x 20 inches
 Gift in honor of Michael Boots
 Collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York, on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Purchase with funds from the University at Albany Foundation and the University Art Museum



Mary Ellen Mark
Old women in black, Las Vegas 4/1991, 1991
 Gelatin silver print
 11 x 14 inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York, on behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Gift of Marvin and Carol Brown



Dave McKenzie
An Intermission (Seven), 2016
 Dye-sub print on knitted polyester
 10 x 6 feet
 Courtesy of the artist and Vielmetter Los Angeles
 Gift of Michael and Elin Nierenberg



Dave McKenzie
Drawing After Andy, 2001
 Video, 1:22; color, sound
 Courtesy of the artist and Vielmetter Los Angeles



Edward Steichen
Paul Robeson as 'Emperor Jones', 1933
 Gelatin silver print
 13 x 10 ½ inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University
 at Albany, State University of New York, on
 behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Gift of Stephen and Linda Singer



Edward Steichen
Greta Garbo, 1928
 Gelatin silver print
 13 x 10 inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University
 at Albany, State University of New York, on
 behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Gift of Stephen and Linda Singer



Edward Steichen
Charlie Chaplin, 1925
 Gelatin silver print
 13 x 10 inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University
 at Albany, State University of New York, on
 behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Gift of Stephen and Linda Singer



Andy Warhol
Unidentified Woman
(Gold Blouse), October 1984
 12 Polacolor ERs
 4 x 3 ¾ inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University
 at Albany, State University of New York, on
 behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Gift of © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the
 Visual Arts, Inc.



Andy Warhol
Jackie Curtis, January 1974
 Polacolor Type 108
 4 x 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University
 at Albany, State University of New York, on
 behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Gift of © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the
 Visual Arts, Inc.



Andy Warhol
Jackie from *Artists & Photographs*, 1970
 Offset lithograph on paper
 11 x 9 inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University
 at Albany, State University of New York, on
 behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Purchase of Art Council, 1978



Andy Warhol
Liz as Cleopatra from
Artists & Photographs, 1970
 Offset lithograph on paper
 12 x 9 inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University at
 Albany, State University of New York, on behalf
 of The University at Albany Foundation
 Purchase of Art Council, 1978



Andy Warhol
James Curley and Unidentified Man, n.d.
 Gelatin silver print
 8 x 10 inches
 Collection of University Art Museum, University
 at Albany, State University of New York, on
 behalf of The University at Albany Foundation
 Gift of © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the
 Visual Arts, Inc.

The Collections Study Gallery will follow a rotating exhibition schedule highlighting artworks from the University at Albany Fine Art Collections in tandem with past exhibiting artists and/or emerging or established contemporary artists.

In 2018 the University Art Museum (UAM) unveiled its new Collections Study Space, a multi-purpose space designed to safely house over 3,000 objects reflecting 50 years of modern and contemporary art, and simultaneously make them accessible to students, faculty, other researchers and scholars, and the community. The UAM is proud to further this mission through the new Collections Study Gallery, as well as a redesigned digital database launched in 2020. The database can be viewed at: universityartmuseum.org

Support is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, and The University at Albany Foundation.