



# QUEENS MUSEUM

## ***13 Most Wanted Men: Andy Warhol & the 1964 World's Fair***

*Special to AAQ East End by Jan Garden Castro*

In revisiting the censorship of Andy Warhol's art fifty years ago at the opening of the 1964 World's Fair Pavilion in Queens, the Queens Museum sheds light on its own history, exposes the conditions that create censorship, and contrasts the power structures & aesthetic tastes of both periods.

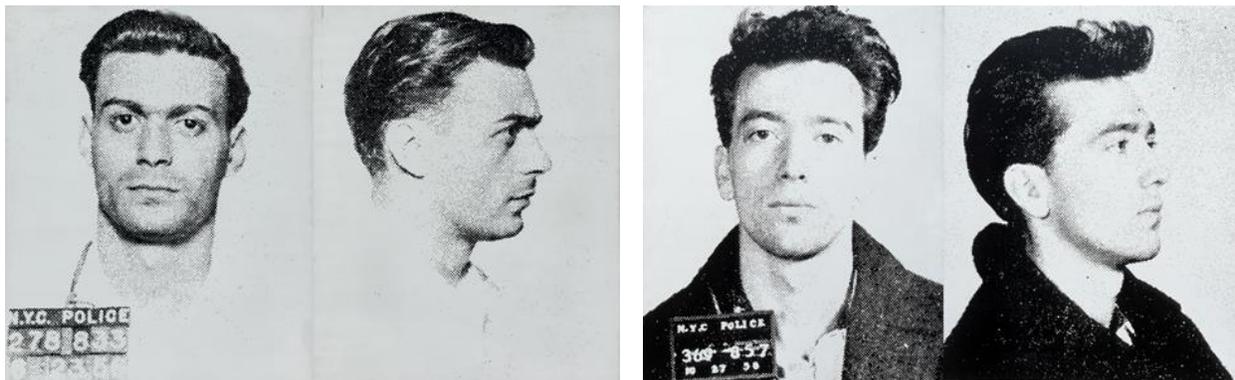
The back story has never been told. We all know that Philip Johnson designed the New York City Pavilion's "Tent of Tomorrow" exterior, but few know that his partner David Whitney was an avid art collector who helped him select ten mostly gay men for prominent 20 x 20-foot commissions around the round building. Robert Indiana created his famous EAT sign – three big electronically-lit letters, Roy Lichtenstein created a new face, Robert Rauschenberg an ad motif, John Chamberlain a car parts motif, etc. Andy Warhol selected thirteen wanted men from a 1962 New York Police Department booklet. He enlarged their mug shots and formed a chessboard of front and profile images for his 20 x 20 spot. Choosing to feature the heads of New York criminals on a public building – for Warhol's first and only public art commission – was a subversive move. Warhol created his electric chair series around this time, and these are two serious subjects unlike others during his career. 1962-64 was a time with some civil rights activity and saw the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. 1964 was a time for civil rights issues, but gay rights and the rights of accused criminals and those on death row were not yet being discussed. Warhol, with his electric chair and most wanted series, was the only artist or person of note to raise these issues obliquely in his art.



*Andy Warhol, Thirteen Most Wanted Men, silkscreen on canvas, 20 x 20 ft. Installed on the exterior of the New York State Pavilion. © 2014 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York*

Even though Warhol's idea for the Most Wanted Men grid was known, it was painted over in silver 48 hours after it was installed in 1964—and before the Fair opened. Many think that then-

Governor Nelson Rockefeller personally called for this art work to be removed from the building just as he and his father had destroyed “Man at the Crossroads,” a mural they commissioned for the Rockefeller Center from artist Diego Rivera in 1932. Warhol probably thought the censorship was the work of Robert Moses, and the artist, ironically, began a series of heads of Moses, one of which is installed in the park near the Queens Museum. It was a time when Robert Moses was changing the map of New York City, for better and/or worse, by inserting highways, overpasses, bridges, and tunnels in ways that helped to unify the boroughs and also to create new bottlenecks of pollution and congestion. To some, Moses was a hero and to others he was a villain cutting through and destroying old neighborhoods. Interestingly, too, Warhol began his portraits of Jacqueline Kennedy around this time (before and after JFK’s murder), and he also painted a portrait of Nelson Rockefeller and his wife Happy.



*Andy Warhol, Most Wanted No. 10, Louis Joseph M., 1964. Silkscreen on linen, 48 x 38 7/8. Image courtesy Städtisches Museum Abteiberg. Photography by Achim Kukulies. © 2014 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY*

*Most Wanted Men No. 11, John Joseph H., Jr., 1964. Acrylic and liquitex in silkscreen on canvas. Image given courtesy Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main. Photographer: Axel Schneider, Frankfurt am Main © 2014 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY*

The exhibition covers the history of Warhol’s creation of the 13 Most Wanted images, press clippings from the period, the censorship of the image, and Warhol’s other works from the period. These include his Brillo and other boxes, shown the day before the Fair opened, and his first Screen Test series titled Thirteen Most Beautiful Boys. This super-slow film series – shown for its first complete run at this Queens exhibition – was both the beginning of Warhol’s screen tests and a nice contrast to the Wanted series since both feature young white “wanted” men with interesting faces. Following the censorship, Warhol produced another set of the Most Wanted Men paintings in the summer of 1964; nine of these are shown as part of the 175 or so objects that complete the exhibition.

The exhibition charts the creation, the destruction, and the social context of Warhol’s Most Wanted Men. The viewer can appreciate the interrelations of underground and establishment; art, protest, and gay life; painting, sculpture, and film in a key year for Warhol. Warhol had the last word in a New York World Telegram story by Kit Kincade published on July 6, 1965: “***I don’t believe in anything, so this painting [painted over] is more me now, he confided.***” Warhol was famous, in part, because he was a keen observer of the social milieu of his times, and he moved quickly among his fascination with high and low people, things, and art-making while at the same time denying that he was doing anything special.

— Jan Castro ([www.jancastro.com](http://www.jancastro.com)) is an art historian and author based in Brooklyn. She is is Contributing Editor at Sculpture Magazine; her “In the Studio” blog is posted at [Sculpture.org](http://Sculpture.org).



*Billy Name, Untitled 1964, reprint 2014, Archival pigment print. Courtesy the artist. © 2014 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. This exhibition was developed collaboratively by the Queens Museum and The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh.*

*Andy Warhol (American, 1928 1987). Nelson Rockefeller, 1967, acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas. 75 x 56 x 1 1/4 in. (190.5 x 142.2 x 3.2 cm.). The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Founding Collection, Contribution The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. 1998.1.152. © 2014 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY.*



### **The Queens Museum \$69 Million Renovation & Building History**

*Queens Museum, 2014. Photo by David Sundberg, Esto. Courtesy Queens Museum.*

*Special to AAQ East End by Jan Garden Castro*

The Queens Museum’s \$69 million dollar expansion process began in 2005 with the selection of Grimshaw architects, along with prime consultant Ammann & Whitney. Their overall objectives included doubling the space for exhibitions and education, making the Museum more visible to vehicular and park traffic, and creating an open, town hall central entry area. The museum’s new footprint is 105,000 square feet. New galleries, performance and event spaces, new educational

workshops, and enhanced office and other back-of-house facilities greatly improve the functionality of the Museum, especially for its use by school groups.

Some striking design features include a metal and glass west entrance canopy, a new glass front entrance, and skylights that bring daylight into the open central area. The light can be adjusted to accommodate for exhibitions, such as the Warhol exhibition, that require low light due to fragile materials. A suite of six galleries surround the central atrium and louvers in the ceiling control the amount of light in each space. On the front of the building, programmable LED lighting will permit new signage. Some trees have been cleared so that the museum is more physically and visually accessible to visitors in Flushing Meadows Corona Park and to those passing by on the Grand Central Parkway.

The expansion allows the Museum to better serve the diverse communities of Queens—and New York as a whole—by providing increased capacity for educational programs, additional flexible performance spaces for public events, and a range of new gallery spaces to display permanent and temporary exhibitions. A curving glass staircase leads visitors to the second story spaces and to the building's updated 1964 attraction – a model of the City of New York that took 100 people three years to create. The expansion was funded mostly by the Borough of Queens, the office of Michael Bloomberg, and the state and city of New York.

#### The history of the Queens Museum building and its Architects

The building was created as the New York City Building\* for the 1939 World's Fair in Flushing Meadows, Corona Park. From 1947 – 1952, it became the first headquarters for the United Nations. Between 1952 – 62, the entire building became an ice skating rink. In 1964, it served again as the New York City Building for the World's Fair, and the southern half of the building became the World's Fair Ice Skating Rink. In 1972, the Queens Museum of Art was created in the northern half of the building. Architect Rafael Vinoly remodeled the museum interior between 1990 – 1994.

Sir Nicholas Grimshaw and associates became involved in the Museum's renovation in 2005. Once the Queens Museum renovations were well under way and a new ice skating rink had been created, the old rink was demolished in 2009-10.

The Grimshaw Partnership, with offices worldwide, has other projects including the planning and architecture for the Caixa Galicia Art Foundation in SA Coruna, Spain and the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science in Miami, slated for completion in 2015.

**Queens Museum: [www.queensmuseum.org](http://www.queensmuseum.org)** — Jan Castro ([www.jancastro.com](http://www.jancastro.com)) is an art historian and author based in Brooklyn. Her "In the Studio" blog is posted at [Sculpture.org](http://Sculpture.org).

#### Visit: AAQ / Portfolio / Architecture — Queens Museum

*\* Editor's Note: The New York City Building was originally designed for the 1939 World's Fair by architect Aymar Embury II, who designed Guild Hall, East Hampton, in 1930. Long Island Expressway (LIE) to Grand Central Parkway West. Grand Central first exit, Tennis Center (9P), turn right, follow signs to Museum.*

**[www.queensmuseum.org](http://www.queensmuseum.org)**

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## The World's Fair Tent of Tomorrow Designated a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation

— Special to AAQ East End by Jan Garden Castro

Over 2500 viewers swarmed into Flushing Meadows, Corona Park, Queens, on Earth Day, April 22, for a one-time visit inside the “Tent of Tomorrow,” a 350 x 250-foot pavilion designed by Modernist architect Philip Johnson for the 1964 World’s Fair. This monument was designated a National Treasure in a ceremony on the same day. Advocates and conservationists for preserving the structure are still weighing the costs of restoration – 42 to 52 million — versus the cost of demolition – 14 million. The new historic label from The National Trust for Historic Preservation, bestowed on only 40 buildings in the USA, boosts arguments of preservationists.



*Images: [Filename – I.e., New York State Pavilion], 1964 New York World’s Fair. Queens Museum Collection. Courtesy Queens Museum.*

The Johnson Pavilion, which has a futurist look, is a circular structure bounded by sixteen 100-foot-high concrete columns, which were made using the slip-cast method of moving the mold after the cement inside dries enough to sustain its shape. The original outside walls around the 100-foot columns were the site of the 20 x 20 – foot panels by ten chosen artists, including Warhol. All that remains of the original wall is a low circular base; this is painted in bold red and white panels to commemorate the original panels made of canvas.

The high columns once held a 50,000-square-foot polychrome tile roof, which no longer exists. The roof was suspended on a cable system designed like a giant bicycle tire – with a compression ring on the outside and a tension ring on the inside. The cable system is intact but rusting; it seems to tilt to one side, but this is an optical illusion.

This structure once had glass elevators named the “Sky Streak” that scaled the outside of the building and two adjoining circular towers, stopping at 60, 150, and 226 feet to let visitors off at two cafeterias, a gift shop, and an observation deck. The side towers still exist and add to the structure’s futurist look. The main lower floor used to have a terrazzo replica of the Texaco New York State highway map, marked with towns and Texaco gas stations.



*New York State Pavilion, 1964 New York World’s Fair. Queens Museum Collection. Courtesy Queens Museum. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately funded nonprofit organization, works to save America’s historic places. Visit: [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org)*