

We mourn the passing of William John Kennedy

KIWI Arts Group is saddened to announce the iconic photographer's death.

MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, January 31, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- William John Kennedy, an American photographer, dies December 16, 2021

KIWI Arts Group announces with deep sadness the passing of William John Kennedy, a legendary photographer whose groundbreaking images of Andy Warhol and Robert Indiana thrust him onto the international stage.

Kennedy, born in 1930 in Glen Cove, NY, was working in advertising photography when he met and befriended Robert Indiana in 1963. Indiana introduced Kennedy to Andy Warhol at the opening of *The Americans* in 1963 at the Museum of Modern Art.

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Patrick Moore, Director of The Andy Warhol Museum

Patrick Moore, the Director of the Andy Warhol Museum, wrote the introduction to the upcoming book on Kennedy published by ACC Art Books Fall 2022.

<https://www.accartbooks.com/us/book/william-john-kennedy/>

Moore says, "Kennedy's portraits of Andy Warhol are his most important work. Amazingly, the prints and negatives sat in a cardboard box in the back of a closet for nearly 50

years as Kennedy pursued a successful career as a commercial photographer creating advertising images for the likes of IBM, American Express, and Xerox. Robert Indiana was a very different artist and person than Warhol, but Kennedy also captures him using a similar



William John Kennedy's photographs of Andy Warhol in a field of black-eyed Susans and Robert Indiana holding "Love" at his Coenties Slip studio, NYC.

technique."

The images he created in 1963-1964 capture the two artists in an unprecedented way depicting their soon-to-be iconic works at the seminal point of their careers and the birth of the Pop Art movement. It was as if Kennedy was prescient of their unimaginable future fame. William John Kennedy's archive includes portraits of not only Andy Warhol and Robert Indiana but also Roy Lichtenstein, Marisol, Agnes Martin, Claus Oldenburg, Mario Amaya, Dorothy Miller, Henry Geldzahler, and Warhol Superstars Taylor Mead & Ultra Violet.

Moore writes about this cast of characters "Kennedy did not limit his images to "portraits of the artist" but also captured their friends and colleagues. These photographs convey the excitement of a small group of friends tasting their first success, aided by dealers such as Eleanor Ward. Marisol, who perhaps inspired Warhol's silent persona, is unguarded with a cigarette and coffee. While emerging Warhol Superstars, Taylor Mead, and Ultraviolet, display their already developed talents of mugging for the camera."

While there may be numerous pictures taken of Warhol, Kennedy captured imagery of Warhol that nobody else was able to do at the time.

Moore states, "Kennedy came up with the strategy to photograph the artists with their artworks, knowing intuitively that the two things were one and the same. In perhaps the most beautiful of all of Kennedy's images, Warhol holds up in front of him the acetate that would become his



William John Kennedy, 1963



Kennedy's unforgettable image 'Homage to Warhol's Marilyn' enlarged to 16 feet tall, hangs at the entrance to The Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

celebrated "Marilyn" series, gazing through the transparent, ghostly of Marilyn's face that would make Warhol famous and Marilyn even more famous." The same can be said about his images of Indiana with the iconic LOVE artwork that is recognizable all over the world.

Newly revealed images shot by Kennedy in The Bowery area of Manhattan in the 1960s have recently been discovered. This imagery is a testament to Kennedy's eye for capturing iconography of a specific time and feeling.

His work has been shown in Museum and Gallery exhibitions worldwide, as well as appearing in numerous books about Andy Warhol and Robert Indiana.

Most recently William John Kennedy's work was shown during Miami Art week in 2019 and 2021. In 2019 Kennedy and his wife, Marie attended multiple events honoring his work during and after Miami Art Week.

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