

# the warhol: resources & lessons

Unit Lesson Plans / Critical Thinking / Collaboration / Lesson 3 / Handout 3.2

## Collaboration Handout 3.2: Andy Warhol's Collaborations

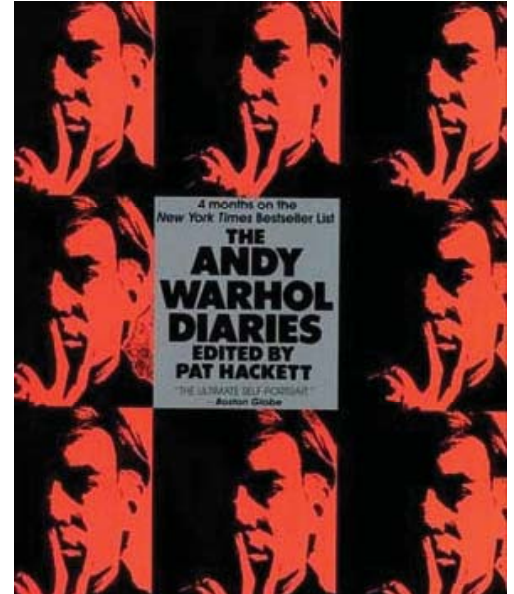
### Andy Warhol & Pat Hackett (collaborative writings)

Andy Warhol's role as author was nearly always collaborative. In the fall of 1976, Warhol started the daily habit of telephoning his secretary Pat Hackett around 9:00 am. As Warhol talked, Hackett transcribed his monologue onto a legal pad. He would tell her the various happenings of the previous day, reviewing the weekend's events on the following Monday in a longer session. If he was traveling, he would often call from wherever he was or reconstruct the missed days upon his return. Later that morning Hackett used a typewriter to create diary pages. Warhol's initial intention was to use these set of entries primarily as a tax expense record for the IRS. Hackett realized that the tax logs contained rich material that could become the ultimate portrait of Warhol. Hackett condensed more than 20,000 of Warhol's diary pages into an 807-page book called *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, which begins on November 24, 1976 and ends 11 years later, a few days before Warhol's untimely death on February 22, 1987. This book was innovative in its straightforward and unedited voice. The entries reveal both Warhol's idiosyncrasies and moments in the lives of the rich and famous.

Hackett worked closely with Warhol for 20 years. Together they coauthored a screenplay as well as two other books. *Popism: The Warhol '60s* reflects Warhol's personal view of the Pop phenomenon and the relationships between creative young people who spent time in his studio the Silver Factory. It also reveals New York City culture during an important decade in American history, the 1960s. The second book Warhol wrote with Pat Hackett, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again* provides a window into Andy Warhol's observations on love, food, beauty, fame, work, money, and success. The *Philosophy* is based on tape recordings of Warhol, Brigid Berlin, Fred Hughes, Pat Hackett, and Bob Colacello. The writing style mixes humor and thoughtfulness, while revealing the good and bad of these people's life experiences.

### Comprehension Questions:

1. What role did both Hackett and Warhol play in creating the *Diaries*?
2. Do you feel there was an equal division of labor in their collaboration? Why or why not?
3. Although Pat Hackett was employed as Warhol's "secretary," they worked together and were friends for 20 years. What might be the possible advantages and disadvantages of collaborating with a longtime friend or employer?



The Andy Warhol Diaries edited by Pat Hackett  
Cover design by Jackie Merri Meyer  
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Andy Warhol, Billy Kluver & *The Silver Clouds* (art and science)



*"Artists and engineers are separate individuals, and if they work together, something will come out of it that neither can expect."* Billy Kluver

The Andy Warhol Museum, Installation, Andy Warhol's *Silver Clouds*, 1966, ©AWF

The *Silver Clouds* continually surprises viewers' expectations and is the result of a collaboration between artist Andy Warhol and engineer Billy Kluver. Exhibited in 1966 at the Leo Castelli Gallery, *Silver Clouds* created an ethereal, joyful atmosphere, and challenged traditional expectations of art by mingling with and touching the viewer. Kluver's knowledge of technology helped bring Warhol's vision to life. The engineer recalls that their original plan was to somehow make floating light bulbs but that when his research group at Bell Labs showed Warhol a sample of the material scotchpak—a metalized plastic film made by 3M that could be heat-sealed—he is reported to have said, "Let's make clouds."<sup>1</sup> The clouds, filled with helium and oxygen, floated through the gallery on air currents, bumping into each other and into viewers in the space.

As an engineer at Bell Laboratories in New Jersey, Kluver saw the importance of interaction between the arts and the sciences. He saw collaboration as an opportunity for engineers to apply their knowledge to a new environment where unusual and unplanned challenges could develop. In 1960, Klüver helped Jean Tinguely create his self-destructing junkyard opus *Homage To New York*. This collaboration led to others with many of New York City's premiere artists of the decade, including Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Yvonne Rainer, Merce Cunningham, and Andy Warhol. In 1966 a series of collaborative performances between Bell Labs engineers and avant-garde artists titled, *9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering* formalized Klüver's involvement with the art world.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Frei, N., Printz, N., & King-Nero, S. (1994) *The Andy Warhol Catalogue Raisonné Vol. 1: Paintings and Sculpture 1961-1963*. London: Phaidon

<sup>2</sup> David Pescovitz, "1957: Billy Kluver, the father of electronic art, earns his PhD," *University of California Berkeley School of Engineering*, 19 February 2004.

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In 1966 Klüver, Robert Whitman, Fred Waldhauer, and Robert Rauschenberg co-founded, Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), which sought to bring together artists and people working with new technologies and materials to generate ambitious projects.

After seeing *Silver Clouds* at the Castelli exhibition, choreographer Merce Cunningham invited Warhol to adapt the work for a new dance performance. The resulting piece, *Rain Forest*, premiered in 1968, with choreography by Cunningham, music by David Tudor, set by Warhol, and costumes by Jasper Johns.

## Comprehension Questions:

1. What materials, experience, and ideas did Kluver and Warhol bring together in *Silver Clouds*?
2. What kind of environment was Kluver looking to create by establishing E.A.T?
3. If you could work with an engineer or scientist to create something new what would it be? Why?

## Research

Research the accomplishments of the engineers at Bell Labs. What are some of their inventions? Describe how these inventions have improved people's lives.

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## Warhol, The Velvet Underground & E.P.I. (music and performance art)

*“The Pop idea, after all, was that anybody could do anything, so naturally we were all trying to do it all. Nobody wanted to stay in one category; we all wanted to branch out into everything creative we could. That’s why when we met the Velvet Underground at the end of ’65; we were all for getting into the music scene, too.”<sup>3</sup>*

Andy Warhol

In the 1960s, popular music became more collaborative and experimental—with rock pushing its own boundaries looking outside of its blues-steeped history to draw from innovations in jazz and composition. One of the most significant bands in rock music of that decade was The Velvet Underground. Their combination of the avant-garde, poetry, and rock and roll had a major effect on musicians from David Bowie onward. Its principal members included Lou Reed, John Cale, Sterling Morrison, and Maureen Tucker. They counted among their influences poet Delmore Schwartz, doo-wop, rhythm & blues, and composers John Cage and La Monte Young.

Reed was an English major and radio DJ. He met Morrison at Syracuse University, while Cale was in the band, The Primitives. The trio formed The Warlocks and then The Falling Spikes with percussionist Angus MacLise in mid-1965. Taking their new name from a paperback book, their first show as The Velvet Underground with new drummer Moe Tucker was at Summit High School in New Jersey on December 11, 1965. That month, Warhol needed a band for a new dance club he had agreed to work with and offered to manage the Velvets after attending their show at Café Bizarre, from where they had just been fired.

In 1966, The Velvet Underground appeared in various venues including *Andy Warhol, Up-tight* at the Cinematheque in February, and then at Rutgers University and the University of Michigan in March. They played against a backdrop of Warhol’s experimental films like *Vinyl* and *Empire* while his studio assistant Gerard Malagna performed on stage.<sup>4</sup> These performances were a collaborative event with live music, performance, multi-screen film projections, and elaborate light shows. Warhol called the event *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable*. Warhol created the well-known banana cover for The Velvet Underground’s first album and provided the concept of the black-on-black skull tattoo for their second, *White Light/White Heat*. As the “house band” for the Factory, The Velvet Underground was a major presence in Warhol’s films, books, and performances. The band left the Factory in the summer of 1967 and survived Reed’s firing of Cale and the temporary loss of Tucker to a pregnancy, until their final performance with Reed on August 23, 1970.<sup>5</sup>

*The Exploding Plastic Inevitable* attracted many people and a great deal of publicity and media. It became a major culture happening as news crews reported on the scene. Warhol said of this time: *“We all knew something revolutionary was happening. We just felt it. Things could not look this strange and new without some barrier being broken.”*

### Comprehension Questions:

1. What type of music did The Velvet Underground play?
2. What was a “happening”?
3. Could *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable* be described as a “happening”? Why or Why not?



“The Velvet Underground and Nico” MGM/Verve Records promotional material, 1967 lithograph with ink and felt-tip inscriptions on coated paper, mounted on cardboard stand 20 1/4 x 16 in. (51.4 x 40.6 cm.) ©AWF

3 Bockris, V., & Malanga. (1983) *Up Tight, The Velvet Underground Story*. London: Omnibus Press. p. 11.

4 Warhol, A., & Hackett, P. (1983) *POPism: The Warhol '60s*. NY: Harper and Row. p.148.

5 The Staff of The Andy Warhol Museum. (2004). *Warhol 365 Takes*. NY: Harry N Abrams.

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