

'Image/Fame/ Memory'

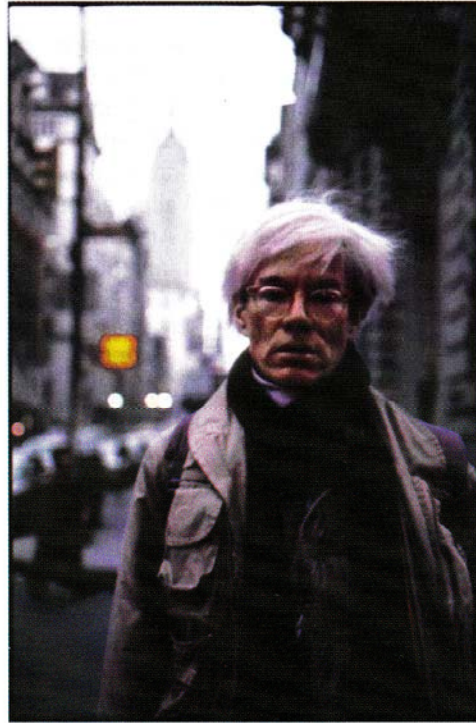
Irvine Contemporary
Washington, D.C.

This show had plenty to slake our thirst for images of famous people. Nonetheless, the photographs by Curtis Knapp, Gerard Malanga, Billy Name, and Kate Simon selected for this thoughtful exhibition go a step beyond celebrity portraiture, emerging as documents of cultural history and works of fine art.

"Image/Fame/Memory," which opened with Simon's lush 1977 Cibachrome of Bob Marley, included portraits of Louise Bourgeois, William S. Burroughs, Dennis Hopper, Madonna, and Patti Smith, among others. A harshly lit 1979 image of Michael Jackson, also by Simon, was particularly moving. It depicts a vulnerable, introspective Jackson, at 21, before his radical cosmetic surgeries, conservatively dressed in a turquoise crewneck sweater and pressed slacks. The singer's hands are clasped together, his gaze seemingly directed inward.

Photographs of Warhol and friends at the Factory by Name, Malanga, and Knapp constituted a show within a show. Name was the Factory's resident photographer from 1964 to 1970, and on view here were several seemingly candid images of a young and industrious Andy carrying Brillo boxes, inspecting flower paintings, and hanging out with Edie Sedgwick. Malanga, who was Warhol's first assistant, contributed a lithograph version of three early, undated photo-booth strips of the artist. In contrast, Knapp's portraits depict the world-weary Warhol of the early '80s. One particularly memorable color image captures the artist on a New York street, with the Empire State Building looming in the background.

The exhibition also featured Shepard Fairey's moderately interesting screen-



Curtis Knapp, *Andy Warhol and Empire State Building*, 1983, C-print, 24" x 20". Irvine Contemporary.

prints of several images by Billy Name and Kate Simon, made in collaboration with the artists. They were presented alongside the original photographs. Name's portrait of Nico, iconic Factory denizen, and Simon's *Paul Simonon of the Clash* (1976) were rendered by Fairey in his familiar style, with psychedelic embellishments and posterizing effects. It's notable, given the legal controversy over Fairey's use of an appropriated image, that the latter work bears both his and Simon's signatures, along with Simon's copyright notice. —Rex Weil