



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Rockaway PR

Alexis Knapp / Dejha Carrington

Alexis@rockawaypr.com / Dejha@rockawaypr.com

O: 305.751.9641 / F: 866.820.8691

\$20 MILLION WARHOL PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION FINDS ITS WAY TO FAME AT ARTPALMBEACH 15TH ANNIVERSARY EXPO

William John Kennedy Reveals 1960s Photographs of Iconic American Pop Artists **Andy Warhol and Robert Indiana**

West Palm Beach, FL – A little over one year ago, at the age of 80, fine art photographer **William John Kennedy** began an unprecedented journey and meteoric rise to fame. His recently published archive of negatives from 1963 and 1964, when he befriended and photographed rising stars **Andy Warhol** and **Robert Indiana**, was quietly introduced to the public by publisher KIWI Arts Group as a collection of silver gelatin prints at a pop-up gallery in Miami Beach in December 2010. After seven stops in major international cities including SCOPE Miami during Art Basel week '11, the collection finds a new home at **ArtPalmBeach 2012** as a curated, museum-style exhibition entitled “**Before They Were Famous: Behind the Lens of William John Kennedy.**”

Slated to open during the 15th anniversary of **ArtPalmBeach (January 19 – 23, Booth #601)** the extraordinary show introduces the pivotal moments and players who shaped the course of American art in the second half of the 20th century. From Kennedy's images of the groundbreaking exhibit **Americans 1963** at New York's Museum of Modern Art, curated by the esteemed Dorothy Miller, to the artists with their iconic works—plus rare 1960s audio conversations between Warhol and artist Ultra Violet—the overall multimedia experience will transport visitors through an important piece of art history.

In conjunction with the exhibition, a short documentary film, ‘Full Circle: Before They Were Famous,’ will screen on **Friday, January 20 at 12:30 p.m.**, followed by a reception with Warhol muse Ultra Violet and Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy. The 40-minute film, starring William John Kennedy, Robert Indiana, Ultra Violet, Taylor Mead and others, chronicles the journey of Kennedy's images as they were brought to public view.

Anyone following the trajectory of photography's commercial value over the past few years will note the market is blazing hot. Prices commanded at both auctions and galleries reflect an insatiable appetite for buying up vintage and contemporary works.

Having only been in the marketplace for 11 months, portions of the limited edition of 60 of each image have sold as much as 50%, among them Warhol looking through the Marilyn Monroe acetate and Robert Indiana holding LOVE—though selling quickly, some of the images in the collection are still available in the \$3000 range. Had Kennedy's \$20 million collection been circulated in the marketplace when they were created in the 1960s, it might now be worth four or five times that amount. A single image of Richard Avedon's limited edition 1957 portrait of Marilyn Monroe recently sold at Christie's for \$231,000, after 1997 sales in the \$13,000 range. Avedon's photograph shared exhibition space with Kennedy in 1967 at the famed Sidney Janis

Gallery in its Homage to Marilyn Monroe exhibit, the only gallery show in which Kennedy participated in that era.

BEFORE THEY WERE FAMOUS AT ART PALM BEACH/2

More profound than just a snapshot of a historic moment in time, Kennedy's photographs—which lay in storage for nearly 50 years—have come to life to tell their stories from the perspective of a supremely gifted artist. Kennedy captured rare moments through his lens of these now legendary artists whose work would later become some of the most recognized images across the globe. Each perfectly composed photograph in Kennedy's collection will undoubtedly find its own way to fame.

Art Palm Beach:

Art Palm Beach is at Palm Beach County Convention Center (650 Okeechobee Boulevard, West Palm Beach) – KIWI Arts Group at Booth #601, in conjunction with NAC Gallery

Preview -

Thursday, January 19 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. (VIP, Press); Collectors Invitational follows from 7:30 to 10:00 p.m.

Fair Hours -

Friday, January 20 - 22 from noon to 7:00 p.m.; Sunday, January 23 from noon to 6:00 p.m.

Film Screening 'Before They Were Famous' -

View the trailer at <http://youtu.be/w1Ozz6d7V0s>

Art Talk | Lecture Series: "Life with Warhol: Then and Now"

Sunday, January 22, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

The Art Economist's Editor in Chief, Bruce Helander leads discussion with Warhol "superstars" Ultra Violet and Baby Jane Holzer.

*Throughout the exposition, the expanded collection of Kennedy's work will be on view at the KIWI Project Space (48 NW 29th Street, Wynwood), its permanent home.

Book:

To further position Kennedy's new place in the historic overview of the Pop Art period, a new book about Robert Indiana was released in December 2011, in which some of Kennedy's key images will be included: [*Robert Indiana: New Perspectives, published by Hatje Cantz*](#)

About the Exhibition:

'Before They Were Famous: Behind the Lens of William John Kennedy' was conceived as a one-year international tour of Kennedy's collection of images featuring historic early photographs of Warhol and Indiana, along with multi-city screenings of the documentary "Full Circle: Before They Were Famous." The 40-minute film, starring William John Kennedy, Robert Indiana, Ultra Violet, Taylor Mead and others, chronicles the journey of Kennedy's images as they were brought to public view.

BEFORE THEY WERE FAMOUS AT ART PALM BEACH/3

About KIWI Arts Group

The exhibition is presented by KIWI Arts Group, a fine art publishing house that transcends the traditional artist-gallery relationship with unique vision and skill. Its mission is to identify talent, create and disseminate multimedia documentation that articulately reveals the artist's proper historical context, and successfully manage all aspects of marketing and sales on an international scale. For more information, please call 305.200.3047 or visit www.kiwiartsgroup.com.

Artist Bio

William John Kennedy, a long-time resident of Miami Beach, studied at Syracuse University, the School of Visual Arts, and Pratt Institute. After working in the 1950s as an assistant and studio manager for renowned fashion photographer Clifford Coffin, Kennedy enjoyed a rewarding career as a top freelance editorial photographer in New York City. His work appeared in publications such as LIFE Magazine and Sports Illustrated. In the commercial arena he created national and international campaigns for corporate clients including Avon, GE, IBM, RJR Nabisco, American Express, and Xerox. Throughout his professional life, Kennedy has continued his passion for fine art photography and developed a full body of work as a fine art photographer.

#