

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

October 8, 1997

PRESS RELEASE

Gagosian Gallery

**456 North Camden Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210**

TEL (310) 271-9400

FAX (310) 271-9420

ANDY WARHOL: Dollar Signs

Saturday, November 1 - Saturday, November 29, 1997

Opening reception: November 1, 6-8pm

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of Andy Warhol's *Dollar Signs* series of paintings and drawings. Created in 1981, the paintings are being shown for the first time since Leo Castelli's 1982 exhibit. In addition, this show will premiere the dramatic large drawings Warhol made as studies to explore and elaborate his representation of the dollar sign in the final version of the painted silkscreens.

The *Dollar Signs* are among Warhol's most powerful and essential images, perhaps equal to the historic *Campbell's Soup Cans* of 1962, in their brash reinvention of what is allowed in a work of art. In the *Dollar Signs*, Warhol unabashedly said that "big-time art is big-time money" and, with his brutal truthfulness, bluntly printed the sign for money as the sign for art.

On the other hand, given their wild color and flamboyant drawing and design, the *Dollar Signs* are "artistic" in the extreme. Like his greatest works, they empty and glamorize in one stroke, making the object blank and banal, yet lyrical and deliciously seductive. Recall the famous *Marilyns* from 1962, where he screened the image of the dead movie star on candy colored backgrounds and titled the series *The Flavors*. The *Dollar Signs* exhibit the same panoramic understanding of the commodity, in all its crassness and allure, but focus even tighter upon its essence: money.

The *Dollar Signs* are signature works in the extreme – the signature for cash, for art, and for Warhol, himself. They also epitomize his deadpan genius for truth-telling and sizing-up the future. When he completed the *Dollar Signs* in 1981, the worlds of art and business had just begun a historically money-mad decade. The pertinence, originality, and affront of these paintings are even more alive today, as the nations of the planet combine into the biggest commodity trading floor mankind has ever known.

The Gagosian Gallery exhibition is also accompanied by a catalogue fully illustrated in color, with an essay by Arthur C. Danto.