

# MIGNONI

## Robert Mapplethorpe: Artist Portraits

September 10, 2019 – October 19, 2019

Mignoni, 960 Madison Avenue, Second Floor, New York



Robert Mapplethorpe, *Andy Warhol*, 1986. Gelatin Silver Print on Paper, 20 x 16 in. Signed and dated by Michael Ward Stout as executor for the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation.

**New York, NY** – Mignoni Gallery is pleased to present *Robert Mapplethorpe: Artist Portraits*, a solo exhibition comprised of some of the artist's most iconic representations of celebrity cultural figures within the art world. Throughout his career, Mapplethorpe photographed models, singers, songwriters, artists, and celebrities, in addition to members of New York's cultural underbelly. Photographed in our exhibition are individuals who defined the boundaries of art and culture in the late twentieth century, by one of the most esteemed photographers of the era.

Mapplethorpe is most recognized for his monochromatic photography. However, the artist experimented with Polaroids, collages, and mixed-media constructions. He also worked in color, in a small body of work late in his career. Despite the sexual nature of his work, which in some contexts has been considered controversial, the idea of classical form and beauty are central to his work. His photographs are masterfully composed, lit, balanced, iconic and immortalized American culture of a defining generation.

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## About the Artist

Robert Mapplethorpe is among the most acclaimed and controversial artists of the late-twentieth century. Mapplethorpe, (1946 –1989) was an American photographer, born in Floral Park, Queens. The artist worked predominantly in black and white photography. His subjects included many classical photographic tropes, such as elegantly composed floral still-lives, iconic self-portraits, nudes, and photographs of renowned cultural figures.

The artist is best known for his erotic photography, which he referred to as “pornographic”. Throughout the 1960s-1970s Mapplethorpe produced a body of homoerotic pictures, which many Americans found offensive, and resulted in debate over public funding for the arts. This body of work documented New York subcultures and sexual acts associated with BDSM culture. In addition to explicit sexual acts, Mapplethorpe captured subjects which were historically relegated to the periphery of art. Examples of such subjects included the black male nude, female bodybuilders and homosexual acts. These images challenged notions of high art, culture, and societal taboos.

Mapplethorpe has been exhibited globally. Light Gallery, New York, was the first to exhibit his work in 1973: *Polaroids*. Other noteworthy exhibitions include: *Robert Mapplethorpe*, Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, in 1983. *Robert Mapplethorpe, the Perfect Moment*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; Traveled to Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C.; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut; University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley; Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio; and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. Catalogue with text by Janet Kardon, David Joselit, Kay Larson, and Patti Smith, in 1988. *Robert Mapplethorpe and the Classical Tradition: Photographs and Mannerist Prints*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Traveled to Deutsche Guggenheim Museum, Berlin; The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (2005); Moscow House of Photography, Moscow (2005); The Guggenheim Hermitage Museum, Las Vegas (2006–2007). Most recently, Mapplethorpe was exhibited in *Implicit Tensions: Mapplethorpe Now*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, USA. January 25 – July 10, 2019 and July 24, 2019 – January 5, 2020.

Robert Mapplethorpe died in Boston, MA in March 9, 1989

## About Mignoni

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Founded by Fernando Mignoni in fall 2017, the gallery which is located in the Upper East Side neighborhood of New York specializes in works by prominent European & American post-war artists with a focus on minimalism.

The gallery advises institutions and private clients in acquiring works by a renowned group of artists including Alexander Calder, John Chamberlain, Eduardo Chillida, Lucio Fontana, Adolph Gottlieb, Donald Judd, Robert Mangold, Agnes Martin, Ed Ruscha, and Rudolf Stingel, among others. In addition, the gallery presents three to four high-quality exhibitions a year.

Mignoni has a 20-year history in the art market. He was previously at Christie's London for nearly a decade before leaving as Director of the Contemporary Art Department in 2007 to join his family's gallery, Galeria Elvira Gonzalez, Madrid. From 2007 to 2017, he organized exhibitions and ran the secondary market program both at the gallery and art fairs.

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