CONGRATULATIONS WILKES UNIVERSITY ON THE NEW SORDONI ART GALLERY
Sordoni shines in debut at new location

By Marcella Kester
For Times Leader

WILKES-BARRE — Gathered around the iconic, colorful pop-art portraits of Marilyn Monroe, onlookers learned all about the works and life of Andy Warhol on Friday while visiting the grand opening of the new Sordoni Art Gallery within the Karambelas Media and Communications Center at Wilkes University.

The exhibit, titled “15 Minutes: From Image to Icon,” is the first to grace the new $3 million, 7,000-square-foot facility and offers some of Warhol’s most famous works, including Campbell’s soup cans and his $1 series along with Polaroid portraits and black-and-white photographs during the time of John F. Kennedy’s assassination.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held before the gallery’s opening, with remarks from University President Dr. Patrick Leahy, Andrew J. Sordoni III and others who reiterated the importance of the arts. Sordoni spoke passionately of the arts and the gallery that carries his name, saying, “The criticism of art is what allows it to endure and go on.”

“This new gallery — its dedication today — but its vision that is embraced by this university, is a resource that will underpin and enhance our very civilization,” he said.

“I just felt very strongly that I also wanted to signal that this university will remain committed to the arts,” Leahy said about deciding to reconstruct the gallery. “So we decided to find a way to reinvent that gallery, move it to a better location, make sure that we have money available to bring in shows, and then hire a first-class person like Heather Sincavage. So this is a culmination of that effort.”

The new communications center at Wilkes is on South Main Street. The Sordoni previously was housed in the Stark Learning Center on Franklin Street.

While the public was busy taking in the scene surrounding them on Friday, Sincavage, director of the Sordoni Art Gallery and exhibit curator, happily answered questions. She acknowledged the new location and exhibit was at the top of her “to-do” list ever since she became a part of the Wilkes family a year-and-a-half ago.

Sincavage said she believes the new building will draw not only more students but also members of the public because of its central location and accessibility — something the former gallery lacked. Once the plans for the gallery were set in place, Sincavage said discussions began about which artist would open the new space. Initially, she said, the group decided to pay homage to the state and use a Pennsylvania artist.

“We threw around a few different names ... but we decided we wanted to go with someone who would be widely recognizable and accessible for a lot of different reasons,” she said. “So here we are with Andy Warhol.”

Sincavage said just as Warhol used art as a vehicle to promote change and the way art is viewed, Wilkes is striving to mimic that message by getting community members to appreciate and change the way they view art on a local level.

‘Came together beautifully’

Ryan Ward, curator for the Maslow Collection at Marywood University, assisted in bringing Warhol to Wilkes by lending the exhibit 11 Warhol pieces. After looking at not only the crowd, but the space and setup of the exhibit itself, Ward said he was thrilled to see how the collection was displayed and the public’s reaction to the art.

“It came together beautifully,” he said. “The space is gorgeous; it has a great rhythm through the show. It’s museum-quality as far as the show coming together.”

Sitting at a table with her daughter, niece and their friend, Sweet Valley resident Tanya Quare said she decided to attend the opening because she wanted to educate the girls on art.

“We came here for a little bit of culture,” she said with a laugh.

“We just got done talking about how he could just take a picture of him eating with his mouth wide open and it would be famous,” said Tanya’s 11-year-old daughter, Jules.

The exhibit will be available to view at the gallery through Dec. 20.
Wilkes University Introduces a New Era in the Arts with Iconic Andy Warhol Exhibition

The Sordoni Art Gallery opens in its new campus location at 141 South Main Street

When Patrick F. Leahy became Wilkes University's sixth president in 2012, he promised his dedication to the arts, stating, “You cannot be a true university without an enduring commitment to the arts.”

The latest exhibition in the revamped Sordoni Art Gallery affirms that commitment.

On Friday, Oct. 6, Wilkes rededicated the Sordoni Art Gallery with a show featuring the works of famed Pennsylvania artist Andy Warhol. “15 Minutes: From Image to Icon” is the first show in the gallery’s new location at 141 South Main Street. More than 80 pieces of Warhol’s work are included in the exhibition, including his renowned works featuring Marilyn Monroe, the Flowers and Campbell’s Soup.

The $3 million, 7,000-square-foot facility is a culmination of a gallery revitalization plan to enrich the arts for students, faculty and staff while contributing to cultural life in the local community. More than double the size of the former gallery, the new space is outfitted for high-end national art exhibits and includes versatile opportunities for teaching and learning. Movable walls allow the space to be uniquely configured for each exhibition. Convenient on-site parking means improved accessibility for art enthusiasts and community members.

“No one can recall another time that a Warhol show came to Wilkes-Barre,” said Leahy. “This continues to position Wilkes as a unique educational institution, offering the opportunities of the large university in the mentoring culture of a small college.”

Warhol’s fascination with old Hollywood manifested in over 500 filmed screen tests. Thirteen are in the exhibit, courtesy of the Andy Warhol Museum, including those of Lou Reed and Dennis Hopper. Polaroid photos that would later inspire original portraits in the pop-art vein are also displayed, allowing for a unique behind-the-scenes look at Warhol’s creative process.

“Thinking about the work of Andy Warhol, one can’t dispute that he was an harbinger of change in the art world,” said Heather Sincavage, director of the Sordoni Art Gallery. “What a great way to launch a new chapter for the visual arts at Wilkes University.”

This is only the latest advancement in the arts at Wilkes University. In June, Wilkes received a “transformative gift” for the newly renamed Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing. Wilkes also offers the region’s only marching band, introduced in 2014. Along with a decades-long commitment to the performing arts, these initiatives enhance arts programming at Wilkes for the betterment of all students, of any major.

“Students today need to study the arts, both in an effort to hone practical skills and in an effort to develop moral consciousness,” said Leahy. “As George Bernard Shaw said, ‘You use works of art to see your soul.’ It is important work and it will always be a priority at Wilkes University.”

The exhibition runs through Dec. 20. For more information, visit www.wilkes.edu/sordoniartgallery.
Paul Riggs, dean of the College of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at Wilkes University; Andrew Sordoni, of Sordoni Construction Services; William Miller, vice chair of the Wilkes University Board of Trustees; Heather Sincavage, Sordoni Art Gallery art director; Patrick Leahy, Wilkes University president; and Cody Morcum, president of Wilkes University’s student body, cut the ribbon to the Sordoni Art Gallery in its new location on South Main Street in Wilkes-Barre.

Visitors enjoy food and drinks in the lobby of the Sordoni Art Gallery.

Wilkes University student Kris Tjornhom, 19, greets people dressed as Andy Warhol at Friday’s opening.

Campbell’s soup can designs based on Andy Warhol’s work are on display at the Sordoni.
A photograph of Andy Warhol is reflected in glass as people mingle in the lobby of the Sordoni Art Gallery on Friday.

Visitors listen to Sordoni Art Gallery Director Heather Sincavage speak during Friday’s ceremony.

The crowd listens to speakers at the opening of the new location of the Sordoni Art Gallery.
Membership Information

Friends of the Sordoni enjoy numerous benefits. Gallery members receive invitations to opening receptions and lectures, as well as opportunities to meet artists and exciting trips. Members also receive publications for each Sordoni exhibition, including postcards, brochures and catalogs. Members receive advance notice of all upcoming Gallery events and enjoy discounts at many Gallery functions. What are you waiting for? Join today!

To be enrolled as a friend of the Sordoni Art Gallery and to support the visual arts in Northeastern Pennsylvania, we offer the following donation recommendations:

- $50.00
- $100.00
- $250.00
- $500.00
- $1000.00
- Other

Memberships can be purchased three ways:
- If you would like to become a member of the Sordoni Gallery, you can call Director Heather Sincavage at 570-408-3365 and pay your membership fee with a credit card over the phone.
- Pay online
- You can mail a check along with your name, address and telephone number to:

Sordoni Art Gallery
84 West South Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766

All contributions are tax deductible.

All upcoming shows at the Sordoni Art Gallery include “The Bones of Us Hunger for Nothing” featuring the works of Angela Fraleigh, and selections from the Sordoni Collection of American Illustration and Comic Arts, featuring the works of NC Wyeth, Maxfield Parrish, Chris Payne and Alberto Vargas.

PROFILE:
HEATHER SINCAVAGE

Position: Director, Sordoni Art Gallery, 141 S. Main St., Wilkes-Barre
Notable: Before her appointment at Wilkes University 18 months ago, Sincavage served as director of the Reed Fine Art Gallery and University Collections, University of Maine at Presque Isle, where she had been a faculty member in art since 2012. As gallery director at Wilkes, she has overseen all phases of gallery operations: community outreach, planning and curating exhibitions, fundraising, supervising student curatorial projects, and supervising a major relocation project. ...

Sincavage earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Temple University, and her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Washington. ... She has been awarded residencies and fellowships in Finland, Spain, New Hampshire, Vermont and Pennsylvania.
ANDY WARHOL
15 MINUTES: FROM IMAGE TO ICON
OCTOBER 6 - DECEMBER 20, 2017
OPENING RECEPTION & RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY: OCTOBER 6

Pennsylvania artist, Andy Warhol, changed how we view art. Inspired by pop culture, Warhol's imagery defined the new age of fine art and proliferated our society, to in turn, become pop culture. This exhibition examines the artist's inspiration, process, and wide influence to both fine and commercial art he made to history.

KEYSTONE COLLEGE
MOBILE GLASS STUDIO
COMMUNITY DEMONSTRATION
SEPTEMBER 15, 2017 DURING ART WALK

PECHA KUCHA NIGHT
COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS
OCTOBER 19

Pecha Kucha, the Japanese word for “chit chat,” is a fun, high-energy form of presentation. Presenters share 20 slides for 20 seconds at a time amounting in an evening where you might learn something new from your fellow community member.

ANGELA FRALEIGH
BETWEEN TONGUE AND TEETH
JANUARY 16 - MARCH 2, 2018

Angela Fraleigh reimagines the woman’s role as it has been depicted in art history, literature, and media. Her paintings reimagine centuries-old, male dominated sources and provide women with agency. Fraleigh is the Chair of Studio Art at Moravian College.

SELECTIONS FROM THE SORDONI COLLECTION OF AMERICAN ILLUSTRATION & COMIC ARTS
APRIL 9 - MAY 20, 2018

This landmark exhibition features more than 100 years of the art of illustration. Often featured in advertising, these works stand alone as works of art. Some artists featured are: NC Wyeth, Maxfield Parrish, Chris Payne, and Alberto Vargas.

GUERRILLA GIRLS
POSTER MAKING WORKSHOP
APRIL 9, 2018
offered in conjunction with the Women & Gender Studies Conference

www.wilkes.edu/sordoniartgallery
P: 570.408.4325
A place that offers all of the educational opportunities of a large university in the mentoring culture of a small college, open to all who show potential.