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History of *Andy Warhol's Index Book*:

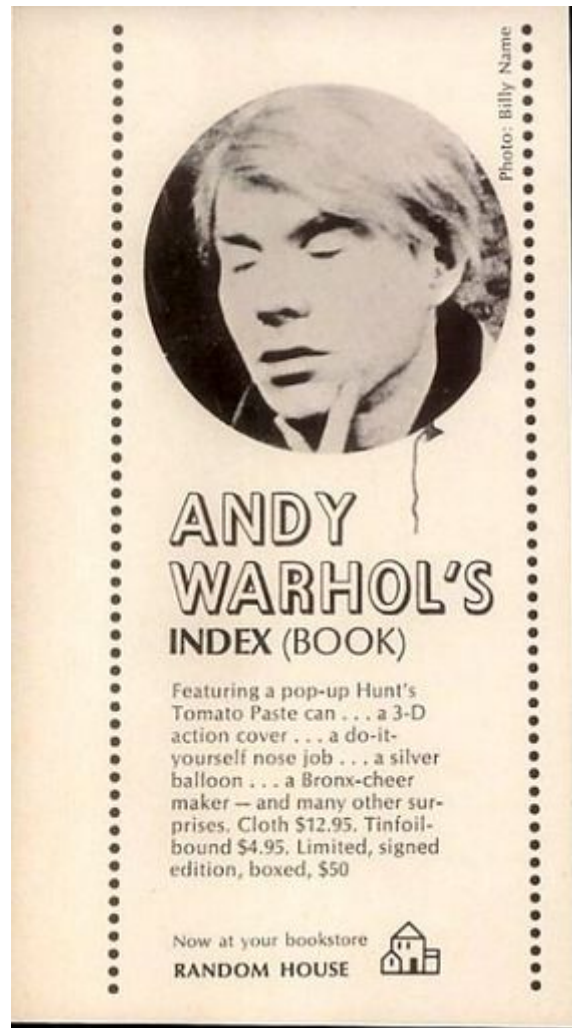


Photo of 1967 postcard / advertisement for Andy Warhol's index book credited to Simmonm1965 's photo stream via flickr

Self-published by Andy Warhol, as “a children’s book for hipsters”, The Andy Warhol Index Book, is an important Warhol book and iconic publication of the psychedelic era in New York. It was about “The factory”, Andy Warhol’s famous (and some say hedonistic) New York City studio where he used to work and shoot his underground films. The Factory was

his original New York City studio from 1963 to 1968, although his later studios were known as The Factory as well.

Index was sold during the 1967 holiday season as a "hip gift book". It was available in both a Hardback (\$ 12.95), a Softback (\$4.95), and a signed boxed edition (\$50.00). Both editions have the same interiors. The hardback has a really cool "Holographic" effect pasted onto it. The books were originally sold in a clear plastic bag with purple lettering, we have seen a book with the original plastic bag come to auction only once. It had a \$12.95 price tag on it and printed diagonally across the bag were the words Andy Warhol's INDEX (BOOK) - also printed in purple- across the top - were the words "...Warhol's bag is the neatly packaged, Saran-wrap society" - Richard Goldstein

Index Book was book cited by both Andrew Roth and Martin Parr as among the most influential photo/artists' books of the century. (Andrew Roth's The Book of 101 Books: Seminal Photographic Books of the Twentieth Century (2001) and Martin Parr & Gerry Badger's three volumes of The Photobook: a history (2004).)

Of interest, because a flexi-disc of Lou Reed is included in the book, Warhol collaborated with Reed's influential New York rock band The Velvet Underground in 1965 and designed the famous cover for the band's debut album, The Velvet Underground & Nico. The disc plays not an unrecorded song by Nico and the Velvet Underground but a casually recorded actual conversation between Nico, Warhol, and others about producing and designing the book. Also in the original advertisement above for this book above, the "strange" rainbow nose was promoted as "a do it yourself nose job."

According to Billy Name the nose was Bob Dylan's. The squeak that one hears on the accordion page was supposed to depict/sound like a fart. The tear off papers that some think were for dropping acid were actually designed to drop into water. Once in the water they dissolve and the name Andy Warhol floats to the top. The Castle design was pulled from a Hallmark Robin Hood promotional. The biplane came from one of Graphic International's promo pieces. Much of the text/design was based on inside jokes between Warhol and his friends. Warhol added little details all the way up until the book was on press.

How it all began - In the spring of 1967, The Legendary editor Alan Rinzler (Bantam Books, Grove Press – later vice president of Rolling Stone Magazine & Straight Arrow books) went to the Random House offices with the concept of a book about Andy Warhol and his friends. Nervously, Christopher Cerf agreed to the book, and Rinzler, Cerf, and Random House designer David Paul headed for Warhol's studio, called The Factory, to discuss materials and ideas. Alan took it to Andy with the notion that the book would also be a work of art. Andy liked the idea and agreed to be the author. Later, Warhol went to the Random House offices, where he happened to see several of the Random House Pop-up Experiments. "Those are nice," said Andy. Right then and there he decided to add pop-ups to the book. Rinzler was the editor for Andy Warhol's Index Book. On his website, he talks about the "very collaborative creative process" of the book stating that "As editor, my job was to create appropriate artistic elements that were consistent with Andy's repertoire of pop art and mixed media to include in the book.." Alan goes on to say that the two editions in cloth and paper were done simultaneously and sold out quickly. They used a particular printer in Japan that was "able to execute just about every crazy idea that we had". (Note: Japan at the time was known for high-quality printing of photographic books) It had taken 3 dummies before Warhol was satisfied and the book was ready for production in Japan. Warhol struggled with the finishing touches, including the nose (for which Christopher Cerf copied over 1,000 noses before the artist was happy). As the book was on press, Warhol was still adding details. One thing he kept – the crossed out the names in front – Warhol loved mistakes. (Although according to Warhol stars.org, In 1992 to Gerard Malanga said that "Billy Name confessed that "out of jealousy" he had crossed out Malanga's name from the photo-ready mechanical for the book while Gerard was living in Rome. Previously, Malanga had always assumed that Andy had excised his credit from the book.") Finally it was printed in Japan, and after a frightening few days when the ship carrying Andy Warhol's Index Book was battered by a Pacific typhoon, copies of the book finally arrived at the Random House warehouse in November of 1967. (Courtesy, Random House, ca. 1967-68) Once it arrived Warhol held a book party on December 14, 1967. Many famous people were invited including Barbara Walters, Truman Capote, Norman Mailer, and others from the entertainment and publishing industries. Index Book sold over 12,000 copies in the first 3 weeks of publication.

Interestingly, Rinzler says that when they were doing the interview with

Nico (which was put onto the little plastic floppy record), he and Andy were listening to the Beatles Sergeant Pepper for the first time. Rinzler also described the factory at the time with its high vaulted ceilings, canvases hanging around, lots of people silk screening and rolling prints, photographers, and people standing around like Lou Reed in his dark shades, the blond German model, and Nico.

About the speculation that the “balloon” in the books was really a condom - We believe that the rubber rumor has been disproven. The actual balloon was originally silver with “INDEX” printed on it in neon pink. Since the actual editor, Rinzler, refers to it a “silver balloon” – we assume that it was indeed a silver balloon. It’s unlikely that many collectors still have the balloon intact since it would have disintegrated in most all books after 40+ years. However, a while back we did find someone with a copy that still had the balloon intact, as it had been preserved in saran wrap. Judging from photos of that copy, it was indeed a balloon shape, not a condom shape. We can also see the traces of silver left, not yet degraded to brown. See photo below. Also - Warhol would often bring in silver balloons to drift around the ceiling of the Factory, so it would make sense that his Index Book about the factory would include a silver balloon. According to “The Great Seduction by Andy Warhol” Blog, “The silver represented the decadence of the (factory) scene, as well as the proto-glam of the early seventies. By combining the industrial structure of the unfurnished studio with the glitter of silver and what it represented, Warhol was commenting on American values, as he often did in his art. The years spent at the Factory were known as the Silver Era, not solely because of the design, but because of the decadent and carefree lifestyle full of money, parties, drugs and fame.”



Figure 1: A rare glimpse of the Andy Warhol Index book silver balloon.
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credited along with a link.

In the book, I'll Be Your Mirror: The Selected Andy Warhol Interviews 1962-

1987 there is some great information about this book. The flexi disc that is usually missing was made from tape recordings that Warhol made of Nico speaking with poet Rene Ricard. The text itself has three interviews, chosen because the producer, Billy Name needed some "fill" between the novelties. 1: A high School student named Joseph Freeman in Brooklyn interviewed Warhol for his student newspaper. (Joseph would later go on to be Andy's assistant at the factory) 2: A German reporter interviewed Warhol at The Factory, and 3: Warhol talking about his film Chelsea Girls. None of the interviews were done for the book. They were prior interviews.

The producer of this book was Billy Name. The factory itself was decorated by Billy, who was also the in-house photographer at the Factory. During an interview with The Factory's "court photographer" Nat Finkelstein, by Joel Cooper in 2002, Nat said, "The major piece that Andy Warhol and I collaborated on was the book, The Andy Warhol Index. It came about when I was at a party at The Factory. I was getting it on with this girl on the couch and when I looked up, what I saw was decadence. So I decided I wanted to photograph this aspect of American society, as part of the counter-culture emerging at that time."

Being cited in *The Book of 101 Books: Seminal Photographic Books of the Twentieth Century* by Richard Benson tells us that the author considered this book to be highly influential. From contributor Vince Aletti in *The Book of 101 Books*: "One of the earliest and most documented of the Factory's books is memorialized, the artist's 1st publication to use photography and text after an earlier series of privately printed illustrated books. A disjointed and playful pastiche, Index has an impromptu feel of a project thrown together as a lark. Most of its pages are filled with high-contrast, snapshot-style black-and-white photographs taken by Billy Name. As if to puncture this glam bubble, Index is also filled with an ingratiating array of gimmicks."

Videos:

As we have never actually heard that red accordion squeak, we were glad to find a YouTube poster, Rumbleminz, with a copy that actually does.

Few of us know what's really on that flexi-disc because we don't want to

tear it out of the book to play it (even if we could find a turntable), We get a clearer understanding of the so-called “interview” from the book *Up-tight: The Velvet Underground Story* (1995). It’s The Velvets discussing the book while their LP plays in the background. Happily, *notsovelvet* posted a youtube video of the flexi-disc conversation between Nico, Lou Reed, John Cale and other various factory persons about Andy Warhol's Index Book! It also includes photos of the crew!

2020 update: Since this article was last updated Bootlegged soundtracks of the Lou reed disc have become available online. The soundtrack consists of promarily of Nico talking over snippets of Lou Reed's standard "I'm Waiting for the Man" and "Femme Fatale". "Femme Fatale" is a song by American rock band the Velvet Underground from their 1967 debut album

Other References not cited above and suggested reading:

Andy Warhol, *Publisher**. Hardcover. 2018. Author Lucy Mulroney
University of Chicago Press. United States. Pages 57-67

*Note: Read this book to learn about the facinating internal Random House memos depicting the ways this book came together.