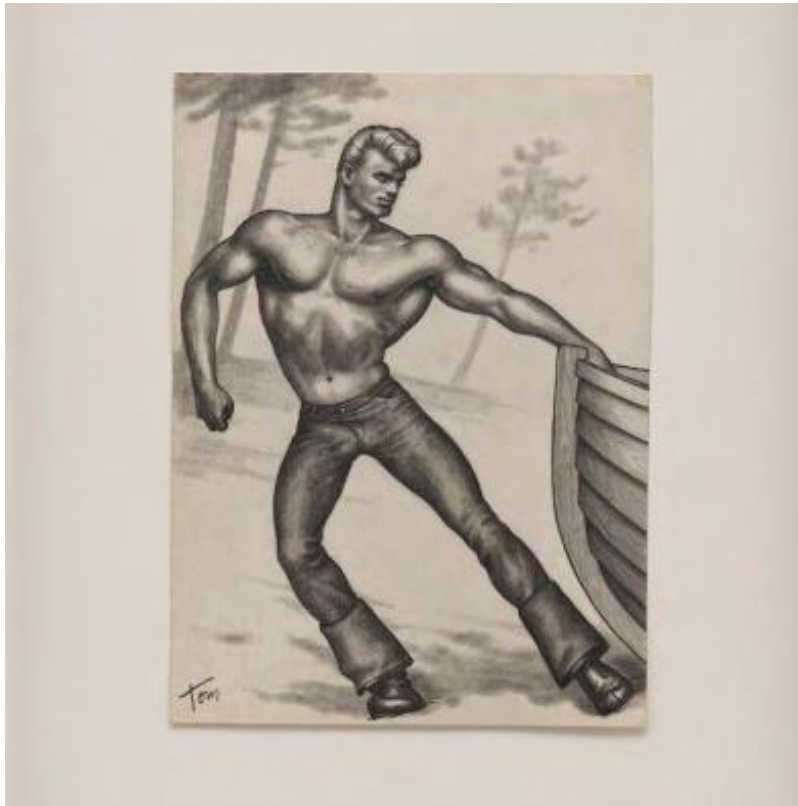


# Andy Warhol's Interview

October 21, 2016

## A COLLECTOR'S CARTE BLANCHE

By Nate Lowman



Tom of Finland, *Untitled*, 1957. Graphite on paper, 9 1/2 × 6 3/4 in.  
Copyright 2016 Tom of Finland Foundation. Courtesy of David Kordansky  
Gallery, Los Angeles.

The notion of carte blanche appears at odds with the commercial art world; giving an artist—albeit another gallery—free reign over one's space and the works displayed within is a strikingly open act. Since 2002, collector Patrick Seguin has made it a habit: his now annual "Carte Blanche" exhibition at Galerie Patrick Seguin invites an outside gallery to construct a show within the walls of his Parisian space. Downtown New York gallery Karma staged this year's edition: "Olympia."

The exhibition's title stems from Olympia Press, a defunct publisher established in Paris in 1953. It published works of provocative (often erotic) fiction such as Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* and William S. Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, and housed them in unassuming covers that shielded purchasers from judgment. Galerie Patrick Seguin and Karma's "Olympia" embraces the publisher's spirit through a group show that features work by artists including Andy Warhol, Pablo Picasso, Tom of Finland, Louise Bourgeois, and Wade Guyton.

Here, Seguin speaks to his friend, New York-based artist Nate Lowman, by phone.

PATRICK SEGUIN: I remember you told me last time at the studio, "I've got to show you the map," your famous map [*America Sneezes*]. I remember you said it's going to be in Dallas [at the Dallas Contemporary], but I don't know why, I'd never seen the image, so thanks for sending it. It's beautiful. It's just amazing.

NATE LOWMAN: Oh, thank you.

SEGUIN: I took the train one Sunday to see your show in Reims [at FRAC Champagne-Ardenne], but Dallas is too far. [*laughs*]

LOWMAN: Yeah, Dallas is far from France.

SEGUIN: Yeah. So, it's one piece, huh? It's shown as one piece and it's one piece?

LOWMAN: All of the separate states and stuff fit together, so it comes apart into more than 50 little parts, but it's one painting.

SEGUIN: One painting... I know you've done Corsica, but that's not one of the American states—

LOWMAN: Well, I haven't done it yet. I've been trying to do it for about three years, but I can't... I've never finished one.

SEGUIN: Oh, sorry, I'm disclosing something.

LOWMAN: [*laughs*] Yeah, you're telling them my secrets. I think it's because for me, Corsica is a place that I visited with my friends, maybe five or six times over the years, and I'm so happy there that I wanted to make a painting about it almost just to share with my friends, but it's so difficult when all your feelings are one way, and they're very sort of happy and pleasant. It's impossible to make a painting about it. [*laughs*] So I have to go there and have a hard time or something.

SEGUIN: I remember seeing this famous painting with the rock on a lake or pond, and you said, "This is where I'm from."

LOWMAN: Oh, yeah—in Wisconsin. That's where my mother's from.

SEGUIN: I love this painting. Actually, talking over the phone, you know I'm in my office at home, which is my study, and I have in front of me, "I'll be dead soon. I'll be dead soon." Fantastic.

LOWMAN: Oh, great. ... I was hoping that when I spoke to you that you were going to be sitting there and not in the gallery.

SEGUIN: So when do I see you?

LOWMAN: You know, I don't know. I just did the exhibition in Los Angeles, and now I'm back home and I'm trying to figure out what to do with the rest of my life. Maybe I'll take a trip. And you have the FIAC coming up?

SEGUIN: Yeah. We have this "Carte Blanche" ... Last year it was with Luhring Augustine. This time it's number 11, and it's with Karma. This show will be really fantastic because it's about publications and books. It's "Olympia," this guy who was publishing in the late '50s. The name of the publisher was Olympia [Press] and it was publishing William S. Burroughs, the Beat Generation. But, the way he was publishing porn and erotic books was that they were all looking normal. You'd never have a cover with anything that could offend. So you could take the train, and have your book and the cover looks like something nice.

LOWMAN: Like a novel.

SEGUIN: Yeah. So the show is really amazing. I don't know why you're not in it this time, but you've been in Massimo [De Carlo's exhibition "OH!" at Galerie Patrick Seguin] and on many other occasions, but not this time.

LOWMAN: That was fun when we did that with Massimo.

SEGUIN: Yeah, it was very fun.

LOWMAN: And I saw a great Jim Lambie show there in your gallery. The year before I think.

SEGUIN: That was a year before. I just put no furniture, no architecture, and contemporary art—my passion. It was great.

LOWMAN: Yeah, I always liked that when I would visit during the art fair. I remember I was begging Michele Maccarone to do the FIAC art fair because I wanted an excuse to come to Paris, so I would help her install the booth, and then I could hang out in Paris for a few days, and then I would come to your place. Did you start ["Carte Blanche"] just as a way of reaching out? I guess it makes sense that you would turn over the gallery to collaborate with an art gallery during the week.

SEGUIN: I always like the artists. I always have a very good relationship with galleries, a lot of galleries and artists, so I don't want any conflict situations. For example, "Carte Blanche" is a Carte Blanche. It's just an invitation, like Sonnabend [Gallery] did in New York three times with me. I've had nine shows with Larry [Gagosian of Gagosian Gallery]: the first one was in Los Angeles; we had four in Paris including two Calder, one traveling Prouvé. So Larry invited me to show Calder with Prouvé. So when it's a "Carte Blanche," it's a carte blanche. I don't want to deal with it. It's the business of the gallery I invite, so I have no conflict situation with anyone. I'm a collector. I think it's great for everybody. Artists like it, they answer positively...

In my head, my business is architecture and furniture; it's 70 percent Prouvé, and Corbusier, Royer, Jeanneret—they all passed away. So it's retrospective, I'm looking back. With contemporary art, even if I collect early Warhol, Basquiat, Bruce Nauman—I have a Calder that was a gift from Calder to Jean Prouvé—[there's] you, Dan [Colen], Mark Grotjahn, and Richard Prince, who I'm all good friends with. [Rudolf] Stingel, of course, was in three of the "Carte Blanche" shows. So with this, I'm looking in front. It's just prospective. My business is retrospective—I'm looking at the past, they all passed away—and it's a big pleasure, that's the point of collecting. It's certainly a [better] quality of life you have living with [these] works, but [I] also [value] the relationship we have with the artists. [Robert] Filliou said, "Art is what makes life [more interesting] than art," so it doesn't mean art is not good. Art is fantastic, but it's also that you come to Paris, you call me, I come to New York, I come to visit you, we hang out together, and that's art.

LOWMAN: Yeah, I love it. Tell me something. What were you doing before you were selling furniture?

SEGUIN: Oh, you know this. *[laughs]* I opened the gallery for my entire life, it seems to me—I opened the gallery in 1989, which is 27 years ago, so it was a long time, but I was not in the business [at the time]. I was born in the south of France, I moved to Paris 30 years ago. I was running nightclubs and restaurants, so that was my business—working until six o'clock every morning, and then one day I noticed my wife. We opened the gallery together. She got pregnant, she was 22, I was 35, and it was time for me to change my life, and I decided to wake up early—wake up at the time I used to sleep.

I just changed my life. I was collecting a little bit at the time. Mostly, I would say, not 100 percent—you can't really tell from my house—but close to 100 percent of my collection is American, so I can say at the time I was collecting mostly American art. When I had the restaurant and the club, I was always surrounded with artists and architects. For example, I'm the godfather of Jean Nouvel's daughter; I've known Jean for the last 35 years. So I decided to do my passion for business. I just jumped.

*IN COLLABORATION WITH KARMA, "OLYMPIA" IS ON VIEW AT GALERIE PATRICK SEGUIN IN PARIS THROUGH NOVEMBER 26, 2016. NATE LOWMAN IS A CONTEMPORARY ARTIST.*



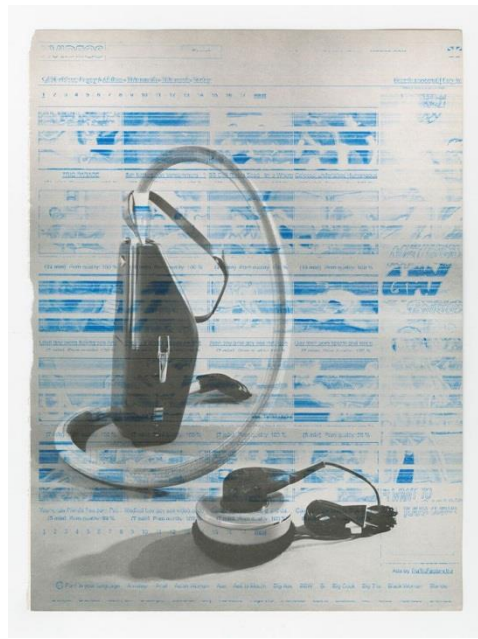
Louise Bourgeois, *PREGNANT WOMAN*, 2008. Gouache and pencil on embossed paper, 27 1/2 x 18 13/16 in. The Easton Foundation and Xavier Hufkens, Brussels.



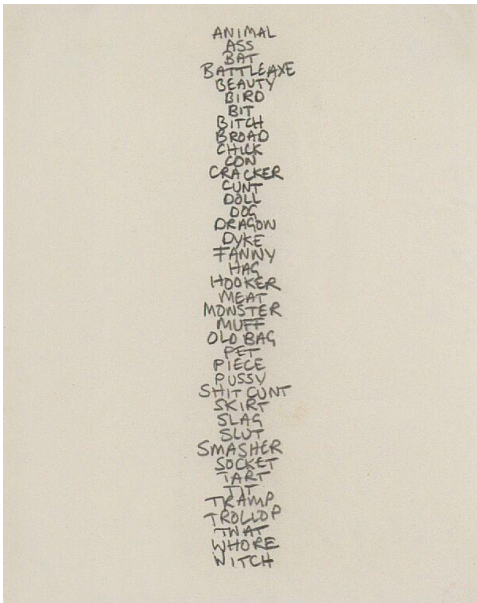
Andy Warhol, *Feet with Flowers*, c. 1956. Black ballpoint pen on paper, 17 x 13 3/4 in. Copyright The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



Steven Parrino, *Untitled*, 1991. Sprayed enamel and pencil on vellum, 9 × 12 in. Courtesy of Gagosian Gallery.



Wade Guyton, *Untitled (Young gay friends 5 min Porn quality 99%)*, 2016. Epson DURABrite inkjet on book page, 10 × 7 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.



Sarah Lucas, *FIVE LISTS*, 1991. Graphite on paper, 13 3/4 x 11 3/4 x 1 1/8 in. Work: Courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London. Photo: Copyright the Artist, courtesy Sadie Coles HQ, London.