

Iconic Darling: Candy Darling's Revolutionary Trans Body

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Figure 1. Richard Bernstein, screenprint (Candy Darling on the cover of *The Picture Newspaper* Vol. 1, Num. 5), 1969.



Figure 2. Richard Bernstein, *Candy Darling*, 1969. Offset Lithograph in colors on wove paper, 23 x 32.5 in (58.42 x 82.55cm).



Figure 3. Richard Bernstein, *Candy Darling*, 1969. Photographic reproduction on newsprint.¹

¹ "NEWSPAPER AND THE PICTURE NEWSPAPER." *IDEA*, accessed April 28, 2025.
<https://www.ideanow.online/newspapercandy.html>.

Introduction

Posed. Nude. And undeniably trans. Candy Darling's unclothed body daringly confronts readers of the avant-garde *Newspaper* (a.k.a *The Real Picture Newspaper*). Wearing a durag, Candy strokes her long, cascading tresses with her right hand while her left clutches the "R" from her spelled out name—CANDY DARLING—pasted below her body in the industrial 3D font calendar.² Candy's chest—developed as a result of her taking female hormones—offers an anatomical trace of femininity that lies in bold contrast to the penis pictured between her legs.³ She has long, beautiful, and flowing blonde hair. But her feminine hair is tied with a durag, something that women rarely wore at that point.⁴ Her makeup is perfectly on trend for the women of the period; plucked and thinned eyebrows, dark mascara, (presumably) red lipstick. Her chest appears slightly pubescent, with breasts barely beginning to form. Her body appears to have no muscle, with slight fat in her legs and calves while her arms and ribs remain bony and thin. Nevertheless, she has the undeniable genitalia of a man. She left audiences questioning how such a body could exist.

In October 1969, this photo collage—one of the first iconic images of Candy Darling—appeared in *Newspaper*, an experimental art publication in black-and-white newsprint that was curated by then 22-year-old Steve Lawrence and edited by artists Peter Hujar and Andrew Ulrick, with covers designed by Richard Bernstein.⁵ Like Andy Warhol's *Interview*, it existed in the shape of a tall tabloid, and when fully opened it was approximately

² "Calendar," Fonts in Use, Accessed April 28, 2025. <https://fontsinuse.com/typefaces/32747/calendar>.

³ Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *Popism: The Warhol Sixties* (London: Penguin Classics, 2007): section 1967, EISBN: 978-0-141-90526-6.

⁴ Sandra E. Garcia, "The Durag, Explained," *The New York Times*, May 14, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/14/style/durag-solange-met-gala.html>.

⁵ Vince Aletti, "The Little Paper with an Outsized Visual Impact," *The New Yorker*, April 14, 2023, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/photo-booth/the-little-paper-with-an-outsized-visual-impact>.

two feet by three feet. Published sporadically between 1968 and 1971 from an East Village apartment, unlike other publications, the fourteen issues of *Newspaper* contained very few words, often just the title of the publication, and images that were occasionally accredited to their photographers or artists.⁶ Although *Newspaper* published images of actors, artists, activists, collages, artworks, politicians, and more during its three-year run, the tabloid was most well-known for its sensational images of sex and sexuality.⁷ The October 1969 cover featured just that (figs. 1 & 3).

More daring than *Playboy*, the cover features a bare-breasted Candy Darling stroking her hair and gazing upwards defiantly at viewers. Meanwhile, the more revealing collage with Candy's full nude body posed like an odalisque confronted readers in a two-page spread placed in the issue's interior pages (fig. 2). Though the photo includes her own body from the belly-button up, Candy's body has been modified to include the legs of an ambiguously gendered, anonymous person as well as the penis of an unidentified person placed in her genital region.⁸ At the time, in 1969, Candy was a blossoming Warhol superstar and an infamous East Village personality described by some as a drag queen. And yet some assumed she was a cisgender woman while others knew that she was a trans woman. The inclusion of an anonymous penis in this collage sensationalizes Candy's body and identity. Though the photograph does not feature Candy's real genitals, its inclusion of a phallus gives credit to the perception that she was a trans woman or drag queen. And yet, because these are not Candy's true genitals, the collage also suggests that she could be a cisgender woman.

⁶ Aletti, "The Little Paper with an Outsized Visual Impact."

⁷ Aletti, "The Little Paper with an Outsized Visual Impact."

⁸ Aletti, "The Little Paper with an Outsized Visual Impact."



Figure 4. Left: Hugh Hefner, cover of *Playboy*, volume 1, December 1953. Right: Tom Kelley, *Marilyn Monroe on Red Velvet*, 1949.

In photographs, Candy exists not only as a glamorous Hollywood starlet and model but also as a confrontational art subject. In this publication Candy poses analogous to how Marilyn Monroe posed for *Playboy* (fig. 4). *Playboy* was published for the entertainment of men, with the subtitle of “ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN.”⁹ On the contrary, *Newspaper* was unapologetically queer and its inclusion of nudity was not necessarily for erotic consumption. Though volume 1 of *Playboy* was sensationalized—especially for its inclusion of a full-color portrait of Marilyn—*Newspaper* existed in a far more radical manner. To start, *Newspaper* features Candy topless with her eyes open, while *Playboy* features Marilyn clothed, perched against a red fabric background, with her eyes squinting, almost closed. Candy is posed and aware of her participation in the image. On the contrary, Marilyn exists in the candid, unaware that her image would be used to sell nudity. Marilyn’s arm draws audiences eyes down to her open halter-top dress, which offers a sneak-peak of her cleavage (to be unclothed within the pages of the magazine). Despite the main selling point of the magazine being sex, *Playboy* is

⁹ Hugh Hefner, Cover Image, *Playboy*, vol. 1, December 1953.

censored and lackluster. Power is taken away from Marilyn and handed to consumers of the magazine. Her innocence and unawareness of her participation in the image fuels the perversion of the primarily heterosexual male readers of *Playboy*.

The enclosed images of our two subjects, Candy and Marilyn also existed in wildly different circumstances. The photograph of Marilyn was created in a 1949 photoshoot with pinup photographer Tom Kelley. Marilyn was promised by Kelley that she would look unrecognizable in the photographs. This, of course, was untrue. Kelley sold the photographs to Western Lithograph Co. and Hugh Hefner eventually purchased the rights to the photographs from the company.¹⁰ The photographs were sold, purchased, and published all without the knowledge or consent of Marilyn. In the photograph, she sits in front of a red backdrop and poses pin-up style with one eye covered by her folded arm and a smile across her face. She is nude, but only her nude upper-body and breasts are visible. Her folded legs and side profile disguise any hint of buttocks or genitalia that one may expect to see. She exists as a feminine icon with her hair glamorously styled, her lips and nails decorated with red pigment, and her gaze sweet and seductive.

On the contrary, Candy's centerfold image is the full-scale version of her portrait from *Newspaper's* cover. Her eye contact once again makes clear that she is fully aware of her participation in the portrait and though her gaze could be construed as seductive, it is also undeniably shameless. She lays on her side, one leg bent and the other folded beneath her, her genitals fully visible to audiences. Her photograph shamelessly features something unforeseen to viewers of *Playboy*, a transgender woman unabashedly showcasing her penis. Though Candy did not like her penis and often called it "[her] flaw,"¹¹ she allowed Bernstein to portray

¹⁰ Brad Witter, "Marilyn Monroe Didn't Actually Pose for the First Issue of *Playboy*," *Biography*, updated September 8, 2020, <https://www.biography.com/actors/marilyn-monroe-playboy-first-issue-didnt-pose>.

¹¹ Cynthia Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2024),

her in this way and present the reality of the trans body to *Newspaper's* audience. Though she existed in contrast to what was expected of her, Candy engaged strategically with photos and acts by starlets such as Marilyn Monroe, often propeling herself into stardom and public viewership. Through her feminine persona and over-the-top, dramatic photographic representations thereof, Candy Darling not only inserted herself as an unforgettable trans woman in the creative avant-garde of 1960s and 70s New York City but also earned recognition as an iconic trans person whose legacy remains foundational in the history of trans visibility. In what follows, I will examine the everlasting acts and strategic images that Candy utilized to unwittingly pave the way for lasting trans visibility and rights.

The Start of Gay Liberation

Throughout the 1950s and 60s, bars that catered to gays, lesbians, drag queens, transvestites, were shut down throughout the United States. Although homosexuality was criminalized in the state of New York, gay bars persisted. The Mafia-owned Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village was known to have catered to LGBT clientele. As long as the bar could turn a profit, the owners were not concerned about client safety or police raids.¹² On June 28, 1969, however, four police officers arrived at Stonewall and, with over 200 customers still inside, incited a raid on the business. Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, founders of the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), were among the patrons of Stonewall who resisted the raid and flung objects at the officers who attempted to arrest them.¹³

The so-called Stonewall riots signaled a revolutionary shift in how LGBT individuals and sexual deviants would behave throughout the 1970s. Following the Stonewall riots, gay

68.

¹² Elyssa Maxx Goodman, *Glitter and Concrete: A Cultural History of Drag in New York City* (New York: Hanover Square Press, 2023), 120-124.

¹³ STAR (1970-1973) advocated for gay rights, fought for protections for incarcerated queer people, and sought to address housing needs for the homeless trans populations of New York; Goodman, *Glitter and Concrete*, 156-157, 168.

rights organization the Mattachine Society of New York (MSNY) urged gays and lesbians to temper their demands and avoid uprising, encouraging them to instead work within the the system to achieve reforms.¹⁴ In early July 1969, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was formed in response to the perceived pitfalls of the slow action of MSNY in order to mobilize the energy and earnestness for political action and “start demanding, not politely requesting, [their] rights.”¹⁵ GLF took the tactics of the Civil Rights movement and worked with minorities outside of the LGBT including heterosexual women, poor people, and people of color.¹⁶ On July 27, 1969, a gay power march, co-organized by the New York chapter of the Mattachine Society, a gay rights organization, and the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian civil and political rights organization, was held to commemorate the one month anniversary of this historic uprising. In an unprecedented gesture, 500 people marched from Washington Square to the Stonewall Inn under a lavender banner. Marty Robinson of the Mattachine Society urged the protest with shouts of “Gay power is here. Gay power is no laugh. There are one million homosexuals in New York City...” and “Let me tell you, homosexuals, we’ve got to get organized. We’ve got to stand up. This is our chance!”¹⁷ Mild and non-violent, this protest marked the beginning of the rise of the gay rights movement that ensued through the 1970s. The first pride marches were held in Chicago and San Francisco on June 27, 1970, a date chosen because it was the last Saturday of June, the same day as the start of the Stonewall riots.

¹⁴ “Gay Liberation Front,” *OutHistory*, Accessed April 8, 2025.

<https://outhistory.org/exhibits/show/gay-liberation-in-new-york-cit/glf/pg-1>.

¹⁵ *OutHistory*, “Gay Liberation Front.”

¹⁶ Katherine McFarland Bruce, *Pride Parades: How a Parade Changed the World* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 43.

¹⁷ Tony Ortega, “In the Wake of Stonewall: Gay Power Hits Back,” *The Village Voice*, July 27, 2010, <https://www.villagevoice.com/in-the-wake-of-stonewall-gay-power-hits-back/>.



Figure 5. Michael Evans, photograph (Christopher Street Liberation Day March Entering Central Park), June 28, 1970.¹⁸

A year after Stonewall, the many chapters of the GLF that had popped up around the country planned their first pride parades. Comprising radical members of the gay and lesbian communities, the New York division drew on their experiences fighting for civil and women's rights.¹⁹ Christopher Street Liberation Day (NYC's parade) began at 2 p.m. on June 28, 1970 to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall riots.²⁰ Over 3,000 people marched three miles from the boarded-up Stonewall Inn to Central Park while chanting gay liberation slogans and holding protest signs.²¹ Marchers brought the queer activities of

¹⁸ "NYC Pride March," NYC Historic Sites Project, accessed April 8, 2025, <https://www.nyclgbtsites.org/site/starting-point-of-nycs-first-pride-march/>.

¹⁹ Bruce, *Pride Parades*, 48.

²⁰ Bruce, *Pride Parades*, 49.

²¹ Bruce, *Pride Parades*, 48-52.

celebration, romance, fun, and pleasure out of the hidden spaces of bars and into the streets. In unprecedented ways, queer people fearlessly displayed their identities in public spaces.²²

The modern gay rights movement, a.k.a. the gay liberation movement, was born on June 27 and 28, 1970 when the first gay pride parades occurred in New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago.²³ Participants in the gay liberation movement encouraged LGBT individuals to disregard social norms of oppression and to exist shamelessly in all spaces. The gay liberation movement and gay pride traditions grew and expanded throughout the United States following the legacies of the original pride parades. The gay liberation movement was one factor that contributed to the much-larger sexual liberation movement. Second-wave feminism increased access to contraceptives and abortion, and changing views on nudity and pornography also contributed to the sexual revolution.²⁴

On Being Transgender in the 1960-70s

Gender nonconformity was part of the expanding gay liberation movement in the 1960s and 70s. People alternately referred to as drag queens, female impersonators, transvestites, and transsexuals frequented the same bars as gays and lesbians and faced similar levels of oppression. Candy Darling and her friend Jackie Curtis are two examples of what it meant to be gender nonconforming in this time. Though the sexual revolution embraced the fluidity of different sexual and gender identities, identity politics and language had been evolving to categorize individuals. During the 1960s, a very fine line distinguished what it meant to be “transsexual” (transgender), a “transvestite,” and a “drag queen.”

²² Bruce, *Pride Parades*, 52-53.

²³ Bruce, *Pride Parades*, 47-49.

²⁴ Carolyn Sprague, “Sexual Revolution and Counter Revolution,” *Ebsco* (2021), <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/political-science/sexual-revolution-and-counter-revolution#the-sexual-counterrevolution>.

Drag queens who identified as such began rising in popularity in the 1950s. Drag queen was a term created by the gay community as the homosexual version of a transvestite. “Queen” applied to any homosexual man, and “drag” applied to the practice of wearing another sex’s clothing.²⁵ Female impersonators or female impressionists were used to describe what we would consider a drag queen today, i.e., a performer paid to impersonate either a specific woman or women in general. At this point, cisgender women could not hold the title of “drag queen” but some held the title of “female impersonator,” dressing up as and imitating celebrities such as Judy Garland.²⁶ In the sixties, the term “drag queen” evolved into someone who could be paid to perform. Drag queens often held other jobs whereas female impersonators were full-time performers. Female impersonator persisted as the more-respected professional title for drag queens into the 2000s.²⁷

Coined in 1910 by the German physician and sexologist Magnus Hirschfield, the term “transvestite” describes individuals who wear clothing conventionally associated with the opposite gender; moreover, originally an umbrella term, it comprised what today we would consider transsexual as well as someone in drag as a practice. As the lexicon associated with these identities evolved, the meaning of transvestite shrank to refer more precisely to those who wore the clothing typically associated with the opposite gender while identifying with their birth sex. Due to its complicated history as both a medical term and a slur, the term transvestite has fallen out of common usage but still refers to someone who is a cross-dresser.²⁸

²⁵ Esther Newton, *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1972), 3.

²⁶ Goodman, *Glitter and Concrete: A Cultural History of Drag in New York City*, 73-82.

²⁷ Goodman, *Glitter and Concrete: A Cultural History of Drag in New York City*, 95.

²⁸ Mayer Nissim, “Transvestite, Transsexual, Transgender: Here’s what you should actually call trans people,” *Pink News*, March 19, 2018,

Transsexual, however, describes a person who believes that their biological sex differs from the gender with which they identify, and thus defines people who either have or aspire to participate in gender-affirming treatments, such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT) and/or surgery. Transsexuality was seen as having evolved from transvestism, with the person identifying as the opposite sex, rather than just wanting to dress as such. Transvestites were believed to experience *sexual pleasure* from wearing female clothing, whereas transsexuals gained a *validation of identity* from it. As such, some transsexuals sought the extra step of a sex change. Female-to-Male (FTM) transsexuals seek treatments such as testosterone therapy, chest reconstruction surgery, and phalloplasty. Typical treatments for Male-to-Females (MTF) includes estrogen therapy, breast implants, facial feminization surgery, and vaginoplasty.²⁹ Since these treatments were very expensive, they were inaccessible to many low-income individuals who were often regarded by others as drag queens or transvestites.

Psychiatrist John F. Oliven coined the term Transgender(ism) in his 1965 touchstone work *Sexual Hygiene and Pathology*. He wrote “[Transsexual] is misleading; actually, ‘transgenderism’ is meant, because sexuality is not a major factor in primary transvestism.” Therefore, transgenderism was categorized by the same symptoms as transsexualism, but was coined to specify that the term related to gender rather than sexuality.³⁰ Those who identified under the term transgender may not have sought the same level of medical transition as transsexuals, instead opting for forms of social transition such as name and dress changes. Transgender has not replaced the term transsexual, but it gained traction for its emphasis on

²⁹ Marta V. Vicente, “Transgender: A Useful Category?: Or, How the Historical Study of “Transsexual” and “Transvestite” Can Help Us Rethink “Transgender” as a Category,” *Transgender Studies Quarterly (TSQ)* 8, issue 4 (November 1, 2021): 430, <https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-9311032>.

³⁰ John F. Oliven, *Sexual Hygiene and Pathology: A Manual for the Physician*, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co, 1965): 514.

gender itself rather than the body and its ability to be an umbrella term for many identities.³¹ The abbreviations *trans* and *trans** have become popular terms that refer to transgender in the twenty-first century. Functioning as an abbreviated term for both transsexual and transgender, *trans* often combining these two ideas into one term. The asterisks in *trans** is meant to represent an increased *range* of identities, including those who do not identify as cisgender, which typically denotes people who identify with the sex assigned to them at birth.³² In 1966, Baltimore's Johns Hopkins hospital became the first United States institution to offer transgender sex changes to both MTF and FTM individuals. The waitlist for such procedures were extremely long, and only 24 patients out of 2000 received treatment in the two-and-a-half years following the opening of that clinic.³³ Like many, Candy Darling travelled to Johns Hopkins hoping to one day receive sexual-reassignment-surgery. Because she identified as a woman and received hormone replacement therapy as an adult, she can be categorized as both transsexual and transgender today.³⁴ In this essay, I will intermittently use the terms *trans*, *transgender*, and *transsexual* in reference to Candy because they most accurately describe her experience and identity.

Despite not performing the iconic lip syncs or stage characters associated with drag queens today, Candy was regarded as a drag queen by many during her lifetime. In this time period there was an overlap between those who dressed up as women and those who identified as women. Many used 'drag queen' to describe Candy because she was not a cisgender woman.³⁵ Warhol referred to Candy as a "full-time drag queen," admiring her dedication to

³¹ Vicente, "Transgender: A Useful Category?: Or, How the Historical Study of 'Transsexual' and 'Transvestite' Can Help Us Rethink 'Transgender' as a Category," 430.

³² Katy Steinmetz, "The Oxford English Dictionary Added 'Trans*.' Here's What the Label Means," *The New York Times*, April 3, 2018, <https://time.com/5211799/what-does-trans-asterisk-star-mean-dictionary/>.

³³ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 71.

³⁴ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 69-71.

³⁵ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 70.

presenting as female full time, unlike those who would put on and remove the identity as a performance.³⁶ Candy did not self-identify as a drag queen and was hesitant to portray drag queens on stage or film, though she did do so in *Some of My Best Friends Are...* (1971).³⁷ I will *not* use the term drag queen to describe Candy because she herself did not identify as one and would not be defined as one by today's definition. That said, it is important to note that the definition of the term has evolved since Candy's lifetime and that she was perhaps categorized as one during that time.

Candy befriended many gender non-conforming individuals, such as Holly Woodlawn and Jackie Curtis. Together, Holly, Jackie, and Candy would go on to be identified as "Warhol's Women Who are Men."³⁸ Many individuals existed somewhere *between* the terms of drag queen, transgender, transsexual, and transvestite; for example, Candy's friend Jackie Curtis presented as a man, a woman, and a drag queen at different moments throughout her life. In 1966, Jackie not only briefly tried female hormones but also first dressed in drag; moreover, she is quoted as saying "I transformed myself into Jackie Curtis because I wasn't getting enough attention."³⁹ Jackie briefly tried female hormones in the same year.⁴⁰ If Jackie were alive today, she may have identified as nonbinary or gender non-conforming. On her gender identity Jackie said "I am not a boy, not a girl, I am not gay, not straight, I am not a drag queen, not a transsexual – I am just me, Jackie."⁴¹

³⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 89-91.

³⁷ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 70, 183.

³⁸ "People are Talking About," *Vogue*, June 1, 1972, <https://archive.vogue.com/issue/19720601>.

³⁹ Craig B. Highberger, *Superstar in a Housedress: The Life and Legend of Jackie Curtis*, (New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 2015), chap. 2.; Goodman, *Glitter and Concrete: A Cultural History of Drag in New York City*, 112-113.

⁴⁰ Goodman, *Glitter and Concrete: A Cultural History of Drag in New York City*, 112-113.

⁴¹ Ariel Kates, "Jackie Curtis: East Village Superstar, 'Pioneer Without a Frontier,'" *Village Preservation*, February 19, 2021, <https://www.villagepreservation.org/2021/02/19/jackie-curtis-east-village-superstar/>. Despite Jackie Curtis's resistance to consistent gender identity and pronouns throughout her lifetime, in this paper I will be using she/her pronouns for Jackie because they are most representative of her gender presentation during this time period.



Figure 6. Photostrip (Candy as a child), mid-1950s.⁴²

Candy Darling's Youth

Candy Darling, future Warhol Superstar, was born a short train ride away from midtown Manhattan on November 22, 1944 in Queens, NY to Theresa Phelan and John F. Slattery. She was raised, along with her half-brother Warren, in Massapequa Park, Long Island by her mother and stepfather. As a child, despite being born male, she began to imitate the female movie stars she saw on television, often personifying Old Hollywood divas such as Kim Novak and Joan Bennett, evidence that Candy's transness was present from an early

⁴² Robert DiGiacomo, "The Glittery Life of Candy Darling," *Next Avenue*, March 19, 2024, <https://www.nextavenue.org/the-glittery-life-of-candy-darling/>.

age.⁴³ One of the most important moments in young Candy's life was when she sent a letter to actress Kim Novak, hoping to receive a signed autograph. In fact, Novak sent back an autograph and letter, not only thanking young Candy for supporting her but also expressing her concern for her.⁴⁴ Since Novak remained one of Candy's favorite movie stars well into her adulthood, this life-defining moment likely contributed to Candy's notion of success depending on being recognized as a beautiful and successful movie star.⁴⁵

In one notable strip of photographs from the mid-1950s Candy drew a headband and bob onto the top portrait of herself, smirking as if she knew what she would later draw on top of the photograph (fig. 3). The photobooth was popularized at the 1889 World Fair and it revolutionized photography, allowing individuals to access self-portraiture for a small fee. The photostrip is a personal form of photography, solely created by the person(s) in the photo and the booth itself. A photobooth allowed young Candy to capture these self-portraits. The top photograph in the set of three features Candy smiling with a drawn-on flared bob and headband. The middle image features her squinting, sucking her teeth, and raising one eyebrow whereas the bottom photograph showcases Candy staring into the camera with a cartoony smirk across her face. It is uncertain when Candy drew in the feminine hairstyle atop her portrait, but of the three photographs, the top one feels the most self-assured and representational of who Candy would become. As such, this series of photographs foreshadows Candy's future identity as a trans woman and constitutes some of the few publicly-available images of Candy prior to her transition.

⁴³ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 8-24.

⁴⁴ This letter is undated; Parmis Etez, "'Candy says...': The Life and Legacy of Candy Darling," *Medium*, June 30, 2022. <https://medium.com/@parmisetaz/candy-says-the-life-and-legacy-of-candy-darling-95de8c49ea7b>.

⁴⁵ *Beautiful Darling: The Life and Time of Candy Darling, Andy Warhol Superstar*, directed by James Rasin (Corinth Films, 2009), 07:00-09:00. https://watch.plex.tv/watch/movie/beautiful-darling?utm_content=5d776a5efb0d55001f544132&utm_medium=deeplink&utm_source=google-catalog.

As a teen, Candy had a few female friends including her cousin, Kathy Anderson. From middle school onward, Candy often skipped school to stay home and watch television or go shopping with a friend. In 1961, Candy officially dropped out of high school; upon turning seventeen, she enrolled in cosmetology school, began dressing as a woman, and started frequenting a bar called Hayloft in Long Island. Neighbors who saw Candy leaving the house in female clothing started rumors that reached Candy's mother. When her mother confronted her about her cross-dressing, Candy came out as transgender, and her mother was supportive.⁴⁶ Though not yet an icon, Candy began her journey toward becoming the future star Candy Darling.

Candy Takes on New York City

In 1962, eighteen-year-old Candy began traveling to NYC via train from her mother's home in Long Island. She made numerous friends at whose apartments she would often crash since she seldom had a place of her own. Sometime between 1963 and 1964, Candy acquired a social security number for "Hope C. Slattery," and her name went from Hope Dahl, to Candy Dahl, Candy Cane, and finally Candy Darling after one friend, Taffy Titz, would parade around calling her "Candy, Darling."⁴⁷ Around 1964, she met fifteen-year-old Jeremiah Newton who would later become her best friend and the post-mortem executor of her estate. At their first meeting, she gave him her phone number, hoping to room with him. At their second meeting, she announced, "I'd like to be your friend," words that initiated the long connection that would last until the end of her life.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 44.

⁴⁷ Taffy Titz has varied aliases and name spellings including Taffy Tits, Taffy Tits Sarcastic, and Taffy Terrific; Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 51.

⁴⁸ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 67-68; *Beautiful Darling*, 12:36-13:42.

In 1965, Candy began taking female hormones, marking her as one of the first documented transgender women to have done so.⁴⁹ That same year, she began exclusively presenting herself as female; moreover, in a letter to her cousin Kathy, Candy expressed interest in receiving breast implants and a sex change as well as a nose job. Further, she explained that she desired a normal life as a woman, with a husband and children.⁵⁰ At the beginning of her transition she was often described as a beautiful yet awkward woman who wore boyish clothes whose only major defect was her missing teeth; ironically her teeth were said to have fallen out due to her love of sweets, the very thing that coined her name: Candy.⁵¹ In a separate letter to her cousin Kathy, Candy notified Kathy that she would not be traveling home for the holidays since pretending to be someone she was not would be too painful, writing “You must always be yourself no matter how high the price.”⁵² In the same letter, she expressed excitement that she and Kathy could live together in the city once she saved up enough money.⁵³

Candy Darling, Warhol Superstar

Although Candy only first encountered Andy Warhol at a nightclub, The Tenth of Always, in 1967, she had previously been dubbed as having “super Andy Warhol élan,” foreshadowing her destiny to become a Warhol superstar.⁵⁴ That summer, she and Jackie Curtis met Warhol again. After Jackie recognized Warhol and asked him for an autograph, Jackie told him she’d send him an invitation for the play she wrote and co-starred in with Candy, *Glamour, Glory, and Gold*. At this encounter, Candy introduced herself to Warhol as

⁴⁹ Erin-Atlanta Argun, “A Look at Andy Warhol’s Ladies and Gentlemen Series,” *Edition Magazine*, August 30, 2024, <https://www.myartbroker.com/artist-andy-warhol/articles/warhol-ladies-and-gentleman-article>.

⁵⁰ Candy Darling and James Rasin, *Memoirs of an Andy Warhol Superstar* (New York: Open Road Media, February 17, 2015), 17.

⁵¹ Darling and Rasin, *Memoirs of an Andy Warhol Superstar*, 51.

⁵² Darling and Rasin, *Memoirs of an Andy Warhol Superstar*, 36-37.

⁵³ Darling and Rasin, *Memoirs of an Andy Warhol Superstar*, 36-37.

⁵⁴ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 106.

Hope Slattery— a name reflecting her fraudulent social security card and real last name.⁵⁵ Both Jackie and Candy were pursuing Warhol’s attention in their early acting careers since being a Warhol superstar meant being at the top of the New York scene. On the night that Warhol saw *Glamour, Glory, and Gold*, he left with Candy and superstar Viva hanging off his arms; Darling later told playwright Tom Eyrn that “... Andy’s going to make me a star!”⁵⁶ Warhol described the show as the first play that had not bored him.⁵⁷



Figure 7. Andy Warhol’s Factory at 33 Union Square West, Archival Photo, 1985.⁵⁸

The Factory—aka the Silver Factory—was the name that Warhol used to designate his various studios between 1963 and 1987. The Factory’s first iteration, on 231 East 47th Street, was a midtown Manhattan loft decorated in silver by Billy Name—giving it the nickname of

⁵⁵ Warhol and Hackett, *Popism*, section 1967.

⁵⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 107.

⁵⁷ *Beautiful Darling*, 29:30-29:40.

⁵⁸ Raul E. Flores, “Andy Warhol in the City,” *NYC Department of Records and Information Services*, January 4, 2019. <https://www.archives.nyc/blog/2019/1/4/andy-warhol-in-the-city>.

The Silver Factory.⁵⁹ Forced to move to a new location in 1967 due to the building being slated for demolition, Warhol set up The Factory's second iteration (1968-73) in the Decker Building at 33 Union Square West near Greenwich Village.⁶⁰ Often staying in the village, Candy benefitted from The Factory's open-door policy, forging a number of friendships there and meeting several important figures, including feminist Valerie Solanas, to the group.



Figure 8. Jack Smith, photograph (Andy Warhol being lifted into an ambulance), June 3, 1968.⁶¹

This policy came to a halt when on June 3, 1968 Valerie Solanas shot Warhol with the intention to kill him. Hearing this news sent Candy, who had not yet received a Warhol role, into hysterics.⁶² All that she had been working for years was about to be ripped away from her. The events of Andy's shooting—including Solanas' and Candy's relationship—is exaggerated in the film *I Shot Andy Warhol*. While Warhol was still recuperating from his injuries in the

⁵⁹ Steven Watson. *Factory Made: Warhol and the Sixties* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2003), 11.

⁶⁰ Flores, "Andy Warhol in the City."

⁶¹ "Time Capsule 21: Factory Shooting," The Andy Warhol Museum, accessed April 28, 2025, <https://www.warhol.org/timecapsule/andy-warhols-time-capsule-21/time-capsule-21-factory-shooting/>.

⁶² Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 115.

hospital, Candy secured her role in *Flesh* (1968), a Warhol production written and directed by Paul Morrissey. Though this project was not directly overseen by Warhol, it still had his name attached to it, and hence Candy nearly achieved her dream of being a Warhol Superstar.

During the time of Warhol's recovery, Solanas turned herself in to police custody.⁶³ Joe D'Allesandro, a bisexual male Warhol superstar, starred in *Flesh*, the film that marked both Candy and Jackie Curtis' breakout roles. As such, September 26, 1968, the day the film debuted, is seen as the moment when Candy became an official Warhol superstar.

Candy subsequently appeared in *Brass Bed* (1968), an unreleased Warhol film that Warhol pitched the film to Candy as featuring eight women—it ended up being nine in production—laying on a giant bed and "...doing whatever eight girls would normally do."⁶⁴ Jackie approached Warhol in hopes of also being featured in the film, but Warhol quickly rejected the request stating "I said eight GIRLS, Jackie. Eight GIRLS... It's different with Candy. No one knows she's a man and she has such a feminine voice too and her beard never shows...."⁶⁵ Though Warhol may not have viewed Candy as fully-female, he accepted and seemingly celebrated her gender-presentation, subsequently dubbing her his "Girl of the Year."⁶⁶ The first (and last) girl of the year in Warhol's Union Square West factory, Candy followed the legacies of Baby Jane Holzer, Edie Segwick, and more.⁶⁷ Warhol used the "Girl of the Year" title to forefront his female superstars and attract press coverage.⁶⁸ Various reporters for newspapers and magazines appeared at the Factory following the release of *Flesh*, and Candy told them about her "multipicture deal" with Warhol that included films

⁶³ Isabela de Sousa, "Andy Warhol's Assassination Attempt," *Edition Magazine*, January 23, 2024, <https://www.myartbroker.com/artist-andy-warhol/articles/andy-warhol-assassination-attempt-impact>.

⁶⁴ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 129.

⁶⁵ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 129.

⁶⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 131.

⁶⁷ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 131.

⁶⁸ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 131.

such as *Blond on a Bummer*, *New Girls in the Village*, and *Beyond the Boys in the Band*.

Moreover, she produced thousands of dollars of publicity for films that she had completely made up.⁶⁹

In 1969, upon learning of a movie adaption of the novel *Myra Breckinridge*, Candy furiously wrote to the studio to consider her for the role.⁷⁰ The role reflected Candy's lived experiences, i.e., a trans woman who was obsessed with films released between the 1930s and 50s and who was "born to be a star."⁷¹ The film's consultant, drag queen Flawless Sabrina (Jack Doroshow) and Gore Vidal, author of the novel on which the film was to be based, considered Candy for the role, though Vidal himself was fired from his own role prior to the start of screen tests.⁷² Never hearing back from the studio, Candy became visibly embittered, having previously fantasized about Hollywood as a magical place that would fulfill all of her wishes. Unfortunately, that same Hollywood blatantly rejected her.⁷³ Though she did not act out the glory of *Myra Beckinridge* on screen, Candy continued her glamorous lifestyle in New York City and beyond with the help of her Warhol notoriety and her acting paychecks from numerous productions in 1969 and 1970.⁷⁴

In 1969, Candy played female roles in productions and movies such as *Turds in Hell* (Gary Tucker a.k.a. Eleven), *Brand X* (Win Chamberlain), and *The Landlord* (Hal Ashby).⁷⁵ Unbothered by the Stonewall riots that happened that summer, Candy had been denied entrance for being a drag queen during her one attempt to enter the inn.⁷⁶ In August of that year, she posed for Richard Avedon when he was photographing *Andy Warhol and Members*

⁶⁹ Warhol and Hackett, *Popism*, section 1968-1969.

⁷⁰ Warhol and Hackett, *Popism*, section 1968-1969.

⁷¹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 32.

⁷² Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 134-135.

⁷³ Warhol and Hackett, *Popism*, section 1968-1969.

⁷⁴ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 136-155.

⁷⁵ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 136, 145-148, 153.

⁷⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 150.

of the Factory. Candy was not just a member of Warhol's factory, she was a friend of Warhol and one of his favored subjects.⁷⁷ Candy secured her second Warhol role in Paul Morrissey's *Women in Revolt* (1971). Production for the movie began in the spring of 1970 and continued throughout that year.⁷⁸

Morrissey chose three "men who wanted to be women" to play women who wanted to be like men.⁷⁹ Two trans women, Candy Darling and Holly Woodlawn, and one gender non-conforming individual, Jackie Curtis, were cast to play *PIGs: Politically Involved Girls*. This film satirizes Second-Wave Feminism as well as specific feminists, particularly Valerie Solanas who had shot Warhol. Jackie was difficult to work with, and Holly was lackluster in her role, fearing the professionalism of Candy and Jackie.⁸⁰ Candy brought the overdramatic theatrics and acting of Hollywood to the otherwise unmotivated film.

Women in Revolt stars Candy, Holly, and Jackie as ad-libbed exaggerated versions of themselves who share their names. Jackie plays a virginal teacher who hates men and lives with Holly, a man-loathing nymphomaniac who constantly finds herself seeking male approval. Disapproving of Holly's lifestyle, Jackie attempts to turn Holly to the ways of feminism and male hatred. The two form the radical feminist group PIGs, and, in an attempt to gather funding for their movement, approach the character of Candy, the daughter of rich socialites who is in an incestuous relationship with her brother. Though originally against the idea, Candy eventually agrees to fund and join PIGs in hopes that she can turn her image of incest around and break into Hollywood acting. Through the film, the characters try to stick to Feminism, but all fail in different ways. Notably, Candy's character has sex with her booking

⁷⁷ Richard Avedon and Gagosian Gallery, *Avedon: Murals & Portraits* (New York: Gagosian Gallery, 2012): 186.

⁷⁸ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 183.

⁷⁹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 177.

⁸⁰ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 179.

agent and eventually becomes a Hollywood actress, plagued by rumors of incest and the fact that she has to have sex with every director to hold onto her acting roles. In the film's final scene, her character is confronted about these rumors by an interviewer. A fight breaks out between the two, and Candy ends up helplessly thrown to the floor.

Warhol and Morrissey admired Candy as though she was the lead actress, and she became the de facto star of the film.⁸¹ Candy modeled for the film's poster which lives on across both VHS and DVD covers for the film. Though her character is a rather helpless socialite, on this poster, Candy takes on the role of a belligerent feminist, donning an aviator cap, goggles, leather gloves, scarf, and pilot jacket to conjure the image of Amelia Earheart (fig. 9). Caught in motion, Candy grits her teeth and throws her fist into the air while her scarf blows in the wind behind her and her hair flares out. Set inside a reddish-pink heart, perhaps meant to represent femininity, Candy displays rage and aggression that overshadow the heart. This image is separated from her character in the film *Women in Revolt*, who is mostly representative of her real-life movie star persona. Instead of portraying herself or her character, she comes to represent the aggression and determination of the movie's caricature of Second-Wave feminists. The title of the film is plastered on the film in a spray-paint font, reading: "ANDY WARHOL'S" "*WOMEN IN REVOLT!*" followed by "Starring: CANDY DARLING" "HOLLY WOODLAWN" "JACKIE CURTIS" and "IN EASTMAN COLOR (X)" in smaller fine-lined black font. This image is particularly important because even though Candy satirized feminists, her very existence was an act of queer and feminist resistance. In this photograph, Candy appears to be doing what she does best: acting.

⁸¹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 179-180.



Figure 9. *Women In Revolt!* Poster, 1971. Offset lithograph on paper.



Figure 10. Richard Avedon, photograph (Stars of *Women in Revolt!* Clockwise: Jackie Curtis, Candy Darling, and Holly Woodlawn for *Vogue*), 1972.

Jackie Curtis, Candy Darling, and Holly Woodlawn embodied their roles from *Women in Revolt* in a photograph by Richard Avedon (fig. 10) that ran in June 1972's edition of *Vogue*. Avedon was a freelance photographer who began working with *Vogue* in 1965 and is credited for blurring and eventually erasing the line between “commercial” and “art”

photography.⁸² The photograph was alongside a gossip section “People are Talking About...” and a small paragraph about the film “*Warhol’s women who are men*. The extravagant trio who are playing a zany part in the reevaluation of sexual roles.”⁸³ Unlike the theatrical poster, this photograph features all three lead actresses, and they are all embodying the role they played in the film.

Like her character, and her real life persona, Jackie is the least feminine of the three. She is wearing minimal, if any, makeup. She is speckled with sequin glitter that crawls down from her hairline and across her face. Unlike Holly and Candy, her hair is straight, down, frizzy, and untamed. She looks up out of the frame, showcasing her eyebags and creating wrinkles that cascade across her forehead. An accessory rests atop her head. She has a floral and striped shirt and brandishes a James Dean button. Her unpolished look, lack of makeup, and smooth skin makes it apparent that Jackie is the youngest of the trio. Jackie’s lack of femininity in comparison to Holly and Candy is reflective of her character’s personality in *Women in Revolt*. At the start of the film Jackie is the most outwardly feminist of the three characters, and, at the end, she comes to be the least feminist. Her masculinity reflects Warhol and Morrissey’s views on feminists as women who wanted to take on the roles of men. From their perspectives, Jackie is a man who is unsuccessful in her endeavor to be a woman playing a woman who wants to become like men.

Candy is positioned to the right of Jackie. Her hair is curled in a casual yet glamorous half-up hairstyle. Her beauty is reflective of Candy as a person, she has thinned eyebrows, wears mascara, and lipstick. Both Candy and her character yearn for the fame of Hollywood, and her makeup reflects the glamour Candy emulated her whole life. Her clothing is neither

⁸² “History,” *The Richard Avedon Foundation*, Accessed April 28, 2025. <https://www.avedonfoundation.org/>.

⁸³ “People are Talking About” *Vogue*, June 1, 1972, <https://archive.vogue.com/issue/19720601>.

particularly glamorous nor particularly masculine. Wearing a plain dark colored short sleeved t-shirt, she gazes over the lens of the camera, just above the audience, and holds a “LOVE ME” heart-shaped lollipop. At the bottom of the photograph, between Candy and Jackie, is Holly, who appears to be wearing a striped button-up shirt, potentially a polo. With the most formal hair of the three, Holly has a curled and short coif and plucked eyebrows that are not quite as thin as Candy’s. She wears her makeup in a mod style, with thick mascara, and eyeliner that travels over her eyelid and along her bottom lashes.

All three figures wear clothing that is not outwardly-feminine, potentially wearing men’s shirts, reflecting the fact that their characters are feminists, who, in the logic of this movie, are women who want to become like men or, alternatively, that all three actresses were born male. Nonetheless, their clothing is a subtle contrasting masculinity to the femininity of their characters and their real selves. Regardless of their clothing, all three figures are clearly feminine. Holly and Candy are unquestionably women, while Jackie leaves room for interpretation as to whether she is a drag queen or a woman. Though a parody of feminism, *Women in Revolt* reflects Candy’s struggles as a trans woman who never managed to make it to Hollywood to become a movie star, even when a role about a transgender woman was being cast. If she had been able to go to Hollywood, she likely would have had to sell her body like the character she played in the film. Though she was not an outward activist for transgender rights, her very existence as both an actress and an art subject was radical.

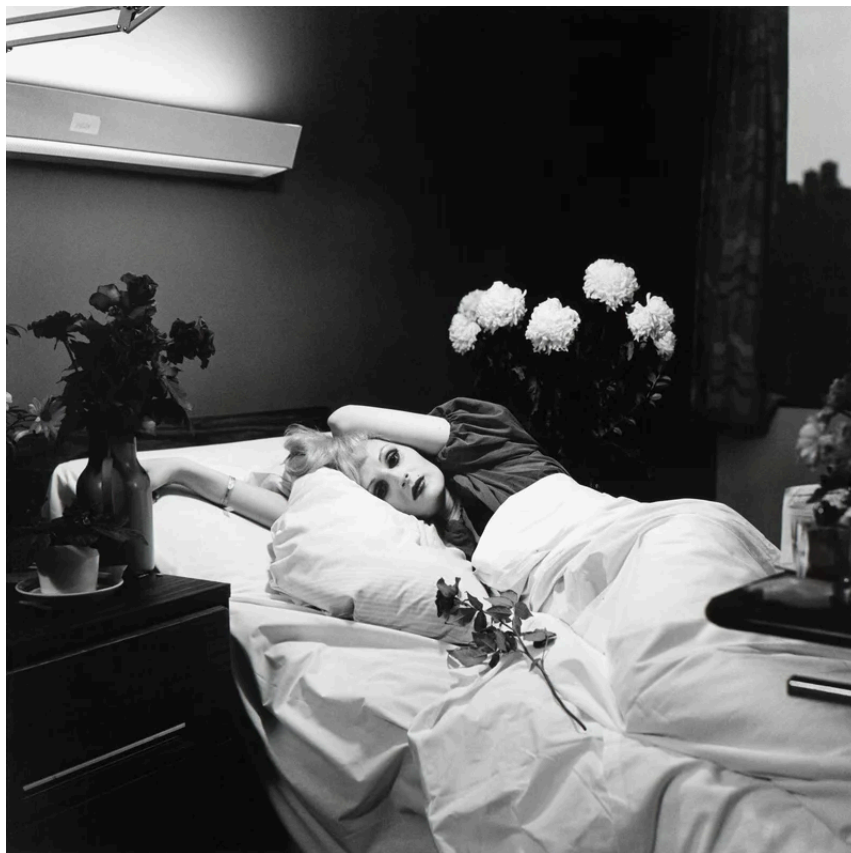


Figure 11. Peter Hujar, *Candy Darling on Her Deathbed*, 1973. Gelatin silver print, 14 5/8 × 14 5/8 in. (37.1 × 37.1 cm).

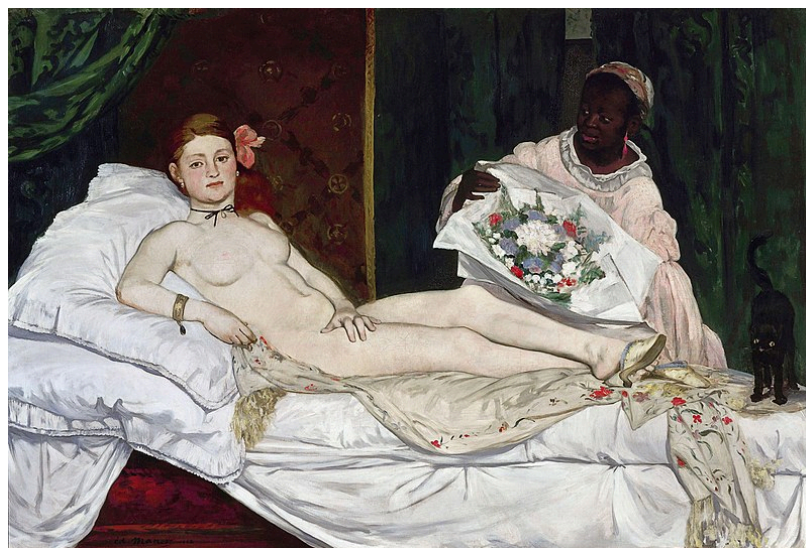


Figure 12. Édouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863-1865. Oil on canvas, 51.4 in × 74.8 in (130.5 cm × 190 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

In 1973 Candy's health took a turn for the worse. She developed a hard belly and would remark "I'm pregnant." when asked about it.⁸⁴ At the end of September that year she was scheduled to have an exploratory surgery to figure out the cause of her symptoms. Candy had Jeremiah Newton call every photographer who had ever taken a photo of her in hopes that she could document her hospital stay. Francesco Scavullo, Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Avedon, Bill King, Roy Blakely, and Kenn Duncan all either declined or were unavailable.⁸⁵ As a last resort, Jeremiah contacted Peter Hujar who had never photographed Candy before, yet immediately agreed to come.⁸⁶

Hujar is now well known for his depictions of death, but during the 1970s he was well known around New York for his involvement in the gay pride and liberation movement.⁸⁷ In the early 1970s he had photographed numerous gender non-conforming individuals including Jackie Curtis in 1971.⁸⁸ Hujar had photographed dead subjects in the catacombs of Palermo, Italy in 1963 that would later be published in *Portraits in Life and Death* (1976). In the introduction to this book Susan Sontag states "Photographs turn the present into the past, make contingency into destiny. Whatever their degree of 'realism,' all photographs embody a 'romantic' relation to reality."⁸⁹ One may expect the photographer, Hujar, to create the romanticism in his photographs, but Candy acted out the romanticism of these photographs to the extreme. Four people were present in Candy's hospital room during her photoshoot with Hujar; herself, Hujar, Jackie Curtis, and Jeremiah Newton. Hujar brought numerous rolls of film to the shoot and allowed Candy to act however she wanted, later stating that "[S]he was

⁸⁴ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 328-329.

⁸⁵ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 335.

⁸⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 335.

⁸⁷ Harrison Adams, "Peter Hujar: Shamelessness without Shame," *Criticism* 63, no. 4 (Fall 2021): 319, <https://doi.org/10.13110/criticism.63.4.0319>.

⁸⁸ Peter Hujar, *Jackie Curtis*, 1970, https://peterhujararchive.com/images/eph_5603-1/.

⁸⁹ Peter Hujar, *Portraits in Life and Death*, Introduction by Susan Sontag, (New York: De Capo Press, 1976), introduction.

playing every death scene from every movie.”⁹⁰ In an interview with Cynthia Carr, Jeremiah confirmed that the posing was Candy’s idea, stating “She knew how she should look... She was trying to control her image.”⁹¹ Candy strove for glamour and drama even when she was potentially (to her knowledge) dying in the hospital.

This photoshoot produced many photographs, though the most well known is *Candy Darling in Her Deathbed* (fig. 9). This photo features Candy in her hospital bed gazing down the barrel of the camera, creating eye contact with the audience. Analogous to Bernstein’s screenprint (figs. 1 & 2), she is once again in an odalisque pose, portraying drama and sex even from a hospital bed. Candy’s willingness to pose in this way gives her control over the photograph. Parallel to Edouard Manet’s *Olympia* (fig. 12, 1863), she breaks the boundaries of the odalisque by directly confronting the viewer. She wants the audience to notice her beauty despite her tragedy and she keeps the audience captive with her seductive gaze. A rose lays on the bed in front of her, while numerous vases of flowers are positioned around her; all signs of the amount of people that cared for her, whether friends, family, or fans. The exaggerated amount of flowers around her only heightens the sense of drama in the photograph. Candy did not know what was wrong yet, but the photo appears as if this is her last day on earth.

Alternatively, Candy’s delusion of pregnancy could influence our interpretation of this photograph. She was bloated with cancer, but she claimed she was pregnant. In Lizzie Merrill’s essay “*Candy Darling on Her Deathbed: Subversive Memorial in the Photography of Peter Hujar*,” she states “By examining Darling’s illness as a metaphorical pregnancy, it appears that constructions of female monstrosity can be reworked to posit the mutable body as a site for subversion.”⁹² Throughout her life, and in seemingly all the photos taken of her, Candy

⁹⁰ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 335.

⁹¹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 335.

⁹² Lizzie Merrill, “*Candy Darling on Her Deathbed: Subversive Memorial in the*

subverts what is expected of a woman. She is unapologetically trans, but she exists as a hyper feminine starlet in spite of what people expected of her. Even in ‘pregnancy’ Candy subverted what pregnancy meant. Perhaps Candy was pregnant, not with a child, but with her own illness. Her diversion of expected femininity once again connects back to Manet’s *Olympia*.

When Manet first showed the now canon *Olympia* many audiences and critics interpreted the character of Olympia as being too masculine. In *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* T.J. Clark describes this phenomenon:

It is sometimes said – it was said already in 1865 – that Olympia is not female at all, or only partly so. She is masculine or ‘masculinized’; she is ‘boyish’, aggressive, or androgynous. None of these words strikes me as the right one, but they all indicate quite well why the viewer is uncertain. It is because he cannot easily make Olympia a Woman that he wants to make her a man; she has to be something less or more or otherwise aberrant. This seems to me wrongheaded: surely Olympia’s sexual identity is not in doubt; it is how it belongs to her that is the problem.

The achievement of *Olympia*, I should say, is that it gives its female subject a particular sexuality as opposed to a general one...⁹³

Olympia’s assertion over the painting is very similar to Candy’s assertion over the photograph. Both subjects are present in their artwork and are not shy to connect with audiences or to assert their femininity. Men interpreted *Olympia* as masculine because she was so present and because of her unique portrayal of sexuality. Though Candy is not depicted in the nude in this photograph, she also has a unique portrayal of sexuality that could be interpreted as masculine because of her assurance in it. In “How to Manet’s *Olympia* After Transgender Studies,” David J. Getsy questions why we interpret Olympia as a female figure, when transgender individuals exist not only within classrooms today but also throughout

Photography of Peter Hujar,” *Aspectus*, no. 4 (Fall 2022): 2, DOI: 10.15124/yao-637q-5x45.

⁹³ T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers*, Revised Edition (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999): 131-132.

history.⁹⁴ Candy and Olympia both exist in a space that lies between femininity and masculinity. Both figures are clearly feminine, but their assertion in their femininity causes viewers to question whether they are actually male, because they assume only a man could possess those traits.

To be pictured on one's deathbed (or whilst actively dying) is a saintly activity that has persisted since the beginning of Western art history and has been perpetrated by the Catholic church. Saints are martyrs, they die for their cause, and for women they are very often members of the noble class. Female saints, in particular, are once again denied their womanhood. Sanctity is associated with virginity and pureness, or alternatively, it is associated with maternity.⁹⁵ Could a woman be pure if she did not possess any of those traits? Through the photograph *Candy Darling on her Deathbed* she acts as a martyr for trans womanhood (fig. 11).



Figure 13. Jeremiah Newton, photograph (Candy at her last birthday party), 1973.

⁹⁴ David J. Getsy, "How to Teach Manet's *Olympia* After Transgender Studies," *Art History* 45, no. 2 (April 2022): 343-347, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8365.12647>.

⁹⁵ Gail Ashton, *The Generation of Identity in Late Medieval Hagiography: Speaking the Saint*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 88-97.

Candy later learned that her mysterious symptoms was advanced lymphoma that had produced an inoperable tumor—likely caused by the hormones that she had taken (that were subsequently recalled)—attached to her spine.⁹⁶ Chemotherapy helped shrink her tumor but she spent time in and out of the hospital for the rest of her life until her death in March of 1974.⁹⁷ During her illness, Jackie Curtis, Jeremiah Newton, Holly Woodlawn, and various other friends visited her. Warhol refused to enter hospitals and instead regularly sent her gifts, including a portable color television.⁹⁸ Candy's last birthday party was held in November of 1973 at Jane Friedman's home.⁹⁹ Jeremiah Newton was once again tasked with inviting friends, and the guestlist quickly exceeded 30 partygoers despite the small apartment at which the event was hosted. She received various gifts and was photographed by Jeremiah looking ecstatic despite her health.¹⁰⁰

Candy's health rapidly declined in February 1974 when she was hospitalized for her third and final time. She had become a remnant of her former self, unable to perform, unable to entertain, and even unable to perform a basic display of glamour. She developed paralysis in her face and right hand and became unable to put makeup on.¹⁰¹ During this hospital stay she enjoyed having guests, no matter who they were, and was fearful of her condition and dying alone.¹⁰² On the day before her death, Candy received no visitors; her mother was unable to go, and Jeremiah Newton was sick with the flu. At 9:44 a.m. on March 21, 1974 Candy Darling passed away, alone in her final moments in spite of her fears of dying alone. Nurses dismissed Candy's mother when she arrived, prompting her to realize that her child

⁹⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 336.

⁹⁷ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 336-351.

⁹⁸ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 339.

⁹⁹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 343.

¹⁰⁰ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 344.

¹⁰¹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 347-348.

¹⁰² Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 349.

had died. Jacquie Collins, who had met Candy in 1972, regularly visited her during her hospitalizations and was Candy's only friend to be contacted by her mother following Candy's death.¹⁰³ Collins rode along with Candy's mother and father in hopes of finding a funeral parlor that would bury Candy as Candy Darling rather than her birth name. Candy's father, Jim Slattery, protested this but was silenced once Collins pulled him and Terry into Campbell's funeral home. Collins and Candy's parents learned from the funeral director that Candy had called two weeks prior to her death to make sure that she could be buried as Candy Darling.¹⁰⁴ Candy's viewing was scheduled for the evening of March 23 and her funeral service for March 25, 1974.



Figure 14. Peter Hujar, *Candy Darling in Her Coffin*, 1974. Gelatin silver print.

¹⁰³ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 350.

¹⁰⁴ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 354.

Jeremiah Newton and Jane Frieman received a beautiful oyster-gray rhinestone dress from Giorgio di Sant' Angelo that Candy had once worn in a fashion show for her burial. Eugene of Cinandre, Candy's hairdresser, did her hair and makeup for the viewing but struggled to return beauty to her face that had been hardened from sickness.¹⁰⁵ On March 25, the day of Candy's funeral, Jeremiah arrived hours early to sit with her before her service. Upon arrival Jeremiah found photographer Peter Hujar alone photographing Candy in her coffin; he grabbed Hujar and threw him out, yelling "You gotta go. You gotta go."¹⁰⁶

Candy Darling in Her Coffin is a lone example of a photograph that Candy had no control over. Her friends and family had dressed her body, arranged her coffin, and had surrounded her in bouquets of flowers. Candy is not able to be an active participant in this photo and Hujar gained almost complete control over the image, minus the way the funeral parlor was arranged. He photographed Candy from several feet away, capturing several of the large bouquets that surrounded her. These extravagant bouquets call upon the image of *Candy Darling on Her Deathbed* which featured a few bouquets and lone flowers and exaggerate the love that Candy received from friends, family, and fans tenfold. Candy is unable to perform the theatrics that she had for Hujar's previous images of her, and yet she is able to embody the devastating image of a Hollywood movie star with her bouquets and the headshot placed above her in her coffin. Hujar has managed to catch Candy in the most vulnerable place possible, death. There are no public images of Marilyn Monroe in her coffin, just images of her closed-casket funeral. The open nature of Candy's coffin creates a sense that the photograph is too-personal or an inside view of the starlet.

¹⁰⁵ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 354-355.

¹⁰⁶ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 356.

We do not often see dead people we do not know, especially stars, and Hujar's image feels documentary because of this. This image appears as if it is for friends and family, rather than for public consumption. As a viewer of this image, I feel as though I am looking at something that was not intended for me to look at. Perhaps this is enhanced by the knowledge that even Hujar was not supposed to be at Candy's funeral, let alone documenting her coffin. Hujar's image is a precursor to the surplus amount of depictions of death that came with the AIDS epidemic. Candy's image exists somewhere between the death of a Hollywood star and the death of a queer person from AIDS. Her cancer was likely caused by her hormone supplements, a tragic coincidence that connects both to AIDS and stardom. If Candy had not taken hormones, it is unlikely that she would have ever been able to become the star that she turned out to be. Like AIDS, her illness is something that went hand-in-hand with her queerness and could be considered an inescapable symptom of her hormones. Following this photograph and during Hujar's lifetime photography was used to give physical presence to underrepresented communities, especially victims of the AIDS crisis.¹⁰⁷ In the Introduction to *Portraits in Life and Death*, Sontag writes "Photographers, connoisseurs of beauty, are also — wittingly or unwittingly—the recording-angels of death."¹⁰⁸ Every image taken of Candy throughout her life has come to represent her in and past death. The headshot of Candy nestled within her coffin is as much of a representation of her death as Hujar's literal image of her corpse in her coffin. Throughout all depictions of Candy up to her death, she portrayed a sense of controlled glamour and stardom that persists today.

Candy's father was a negative presence leading up to and throughout her funeral. He banned anyone he considered to be a drag queen from the service; which led to friends such as

¹⁰⁷ Merrill, "Candy Darling on her Deathbed: Subversive Memorial in the Photography of Peter Hujar," 3.

¹⁰⁸ Hujar, *Portraits in Life and Death*, Introduction.

Holly Woodlawn, appearing at Candy's funeral in a suit. Mr. Slattery caused two versions of Candy's funeral card to be printed, one reading 'Candy Darling' and one reading 'James L. Slattery.' Many friends took one of each.¹⁰⁹ Jeremiah Newton was invited to give a eulogy at Candy's funeral but he was hysterical over her death and ultimately declined. As people were leaving the service Jeremiah ran up to Candy's coffin and grabbed her coffin as if he was trying to climb into it with her, a show of his love for Candy, no matter how hysterical it may have been.¹¹⁰

After the service, as Candy's coffin was loaded into the hearse, Gloria Swanson of *Sunset Boulevard* was seen outside the venue alone in a black Rolls Royce. She quietly paid tribute to Candy and swiftly drove away. Further away, on Eighty-First Street, a number of street queens, the people who Candy began her journey with, were seen in their most-appropriate mourning attire. They had not entered the service for fear of not being accepted; yet they were most certainly there to honor Candy's life.¹¹¹ Candy Darling touched those in all walks of life; ultra-famous artists, musicians, photographers, actors, small New York City street queens, playwrights, designers, and friends.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 356.

¹¹⁰ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 359.

¹¹¹ Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 359.

¹¹² Carr, *Candy Darling: Dreamer, Icon, Superstar*, 359.



Figure 15. Richard Avedon, *Andy Warhol and Members of the Factory*, New York City, October 30, 1969. Gelatin Silver Prints, 31ft and 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in x 10 ft 2in. First displayed at Marlborough Gallery. "Richard Avedon, Photographer," September 10, 1975–October 4, 1975.

Candy's Legacy

In 1968 Richard Avedon adopted a Deardorff 8 x 10 camera that allowed him to make eye contact with his subjects while photographing them, a type of connection impossible with his previous camera, allowing him to begin making images that could break down the barrier between himself, the camera, and the subjects.¹¹³ Avedon first photographed Warhol in April of 1969, returning to photograph Warhol and members of the factory in August of that year as part of his *Hard Times* series that documented various social and political groups in relation to the political landscape in the U.S. In particular, Avedon chose Warhol's factory to represent the sexual revolution of the late 1960s. Beginning August 14, 1969, Avedon made 91 exposures of the factory during this first session, though he later declared the session a failure.¹¹⁴ Between visits, Avedon concluded that to best encompass large groups of people, he should create multiple photographs that he would then assemble into one long line. He photographed factory members again on August 28, and his last session was on October 30, 1969, an engagement that produced the portrait of *Andy Warhol and Members of the Factory, New York City*. Read from left to right, the striking individuals in this photographic mural are: Paul Morrissey, Joe D'Allesandro, Candy Darling, Eric Emerson, Jay Johnson, Tom Hompertz, Gerard Malanga, Viva, Paul Morrissey (again) Taylor Mead, Brigid Polk, Joe D'Allesandro (again), and Andy Warhol, who was instantly recognizable. Moreover, although Morrissey and D'Allesandro's double inclusion on the left and right panels is noteworthy, the most captivating person within the group portrait is undeniably Candy Darling.

¹¹³ Avedon and Gagosian Gallery, *Avedon: Murals & Portraits*, 183.

¹¹⁴ Avedon and Gagosian Gallery, *Avedon: Murals & Portraits*, 183.

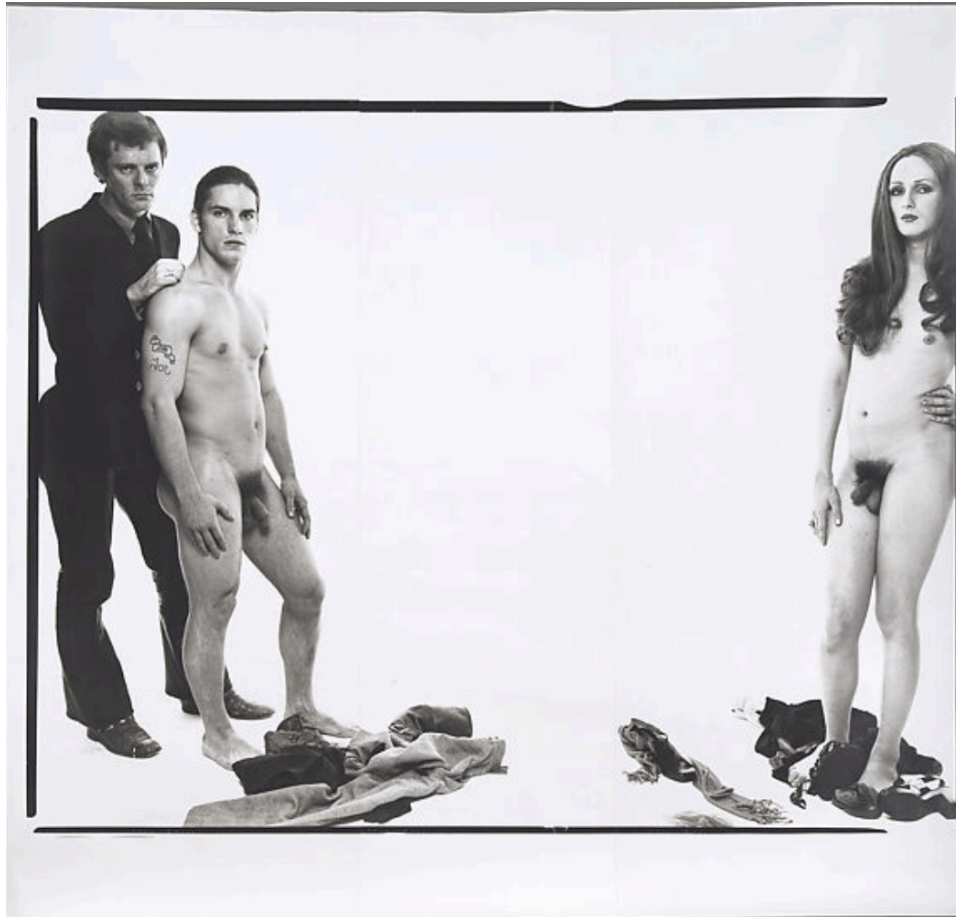


Figure 16. Richard Avedon, Detail, *Andy Warhol and Members of the Factory*, New York City, October 30, 1969. Gelatin Silver Prints, 31ft and 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in x 10 ft 2in. First displayed at Marlborough Gallery. "Richard Avedon, Photographer," September 10, 1975–October 4, 1975.

Candy stands nude and in contrapposto, with one hand resting upon her left hip and the other resting atop her right thigh adjacent to her uncovered penis. Unlike Bernstein's previously discussed portrait in *Newspaper*, here Candy's unaltered body appears with her own legs and genitals (figs. 1-3). Despite the presence of her genitals, she is undoubtedly a woman with her made-up face and long hair that curls elegantly near her breasts. Her feminine form is contrasted by the masculine business suit of Morrissey and the chiseled nude body of D'Allessandro to her right. To her left, in the central frame, the masculine nudity continues with Emerson, Johnson, and Hompertz. The men—nonchalant and comfortable with their nudity—complement their roles in Warhol's films. Avedon joked about their nudity—"You

couldn't keep the clothes on anybody in those years... Before you could say 'hello,' they were nude and ready to ride."¹¹⁵ Only two other women exist within the mural, both in the right panel, Viva stands fully clothed and Brigid Polk stands with one breast purposefully freed from the confines of her shirt. Viva provides a balance to Candy, in an almost-mirrored position within her panel. Polk's bare-breasted-ness compliments Candy's nudity, with both women gazing purposefully at the camera.

The contrast between the Renaissance-esque figure of Candy and the nude males is evocative of the Hellenistic tradition of the hermaphrodite. Hermaphroditus was the child of Hermes and Aphrodite, born male, but became intersex (or, a hermaphrodite), when the nymph Salmacis begged the gods to permanently unite the two. Salmacis and Hermaphroditus became one being, with both male and female characteristics that was known under the name of Hermaphrodite.¹¹⁶ Typically, Hermaphrodite is depicted with a feminine face and breasts, and a penis. Hermaphrodite's body is typically depicted as feminine and curvaceous, though sometimes it is masculine and muscular. Hermaphrodite has been a commonly found figure in Western art for thousands of years, though certain figures, like variations of *Sleeping Hermaphroditus* (also known as *Sleeping Hermaphrodite* or *Hermaphrodite*) offer audiences a surprise; *Sleeping Hermaphroditus* appears fully feminine from the back side, perhaps appearing to be Aphrodite, but when viewed from the front the figure's penis is visible.¹¹⁷ Portrayals of Hermaphrodite are based in study, comedy, and fascination rather than religion.¹¹⁸ Hermaphrodite's shock value is similar to the criticism Candy's body received

¹¹⁵ "Andy Warhol and Members of the Factory, New York City," The Met, Accessed April 29, 2025, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/284262>.

¹¹⁶ Marie Delcourt, *Hermaphrodite: Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity* (London: Longacre Press, 1961), 53.

¹¹⁷ Aileen Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon: Hermaphrodites in Ancient Art and Culture," *Papers of The Norwegian Institute at Athens* 2 (1995), 93, <https://hdl.handle.net/1956/24328>,

¹¹⁸ Delcourt, *Hermaphrodite: Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity*, 55.

upon the unveiling of *Andy Warhol and Members of the Factory, New York City* (fig. 15-16).



Figure 17. Giovanni Francesco Susisni, *Hermaphrodite*, 1639. Bronze sculpture, $4 \frac{5}{8} \times 17 \times 7 \frac{1}{4}$ in. ($11.7 \times 43.2 \times 18.4$ cm). The Metropolitan, New York City.¹¹⁹

Shortly after Candy's death, Richard Avedon exhibited *Andy Warhol and Members of the Factory, New York City*, at the Marlborough Gallery in New York City (fig. 15). The show, entitled *Portraits*, on display from September 10 to October 4, 1975, featured a number of portraits by Avedon alongside his larger murals: *The Chicago Seven, Chicago*; *The Mission Council, Saigon, South Vietnam*; and *Andy Warhol and Members of the Factory, New York City*. In response to the exhibition, Janet Malcolm for *The New Yorker* wrote:

...The Factory picture, in which several of the hands have taken off their clothes, provides a similar yawn of recognition (though one lovely creature with long blond hair, a delicately made-up face, and an incongruous penis affords a certain sickening fascination). One feels about these pictures, as one feels about so many of the portraits, that the most enormous and elaborate lengths have been gone to for too small returns. One finally balks at the low sensationalism that is being offered as high seriousness. A master of the dazzling legerdemain of fashion photography, Avedon remains a pupil for the light-of-day simplicity that is the proper study of the photographer and the glory of photography.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ "Hermaphrodite," The Met, accessed May 1, 2025, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/206698>.

¹²⁰ Janet Malcolm, "Men Without Props," *The New Yorker*, September 22, 1975, 121, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1975/09/22/men-without-props>.

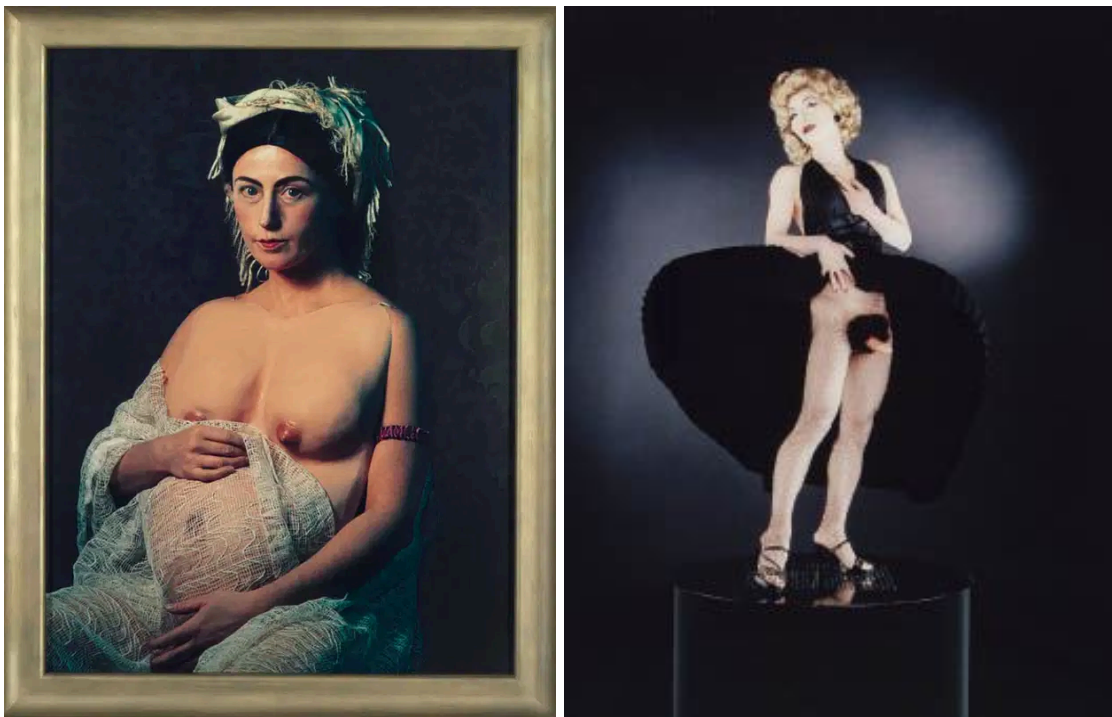
Malcolm's description of Candy's body is a reaction of shock-value, though some reacted to her body with transphobia and negativity. A particularly negative review relating to the exhibition *Richard Avedon: Portraits* (2002-03) describes Candy as "...apparently a hermaphrodite..." and calls the Factory portrait a "...grotesque critique of American sexuality..."¹²¹ Most recently, the portrait was shown at The Met in the 2023 exhibition *Richard Avedon: Murals* with a reviewer describing Candy's nudity as "...still a disorienting image to this day."¹²² Candy's continuously misunderstood body, like the Hermaphrodite's, is gawked at. They represent an undeniable truth of the human body and existence of gender as a spectrum that includes the human body existing in many different forms. Though numerous critics have reacted negatively to Candy's body—with the most positive review being surprise—she represents an identity that has continuously existed and been represented throughout human and art history.

Both Candy Darling and Hermaphrodite existed too early to experience nuanced critique and discussion on gender; nonetheless, they paved the way for increased visibility and discussion of unique types and combinations of bodies and gender identities. Arguably, Candy took the form of Hermaphrodite out of the mythological ethos of ancient Greece and transformed it into a form of visibility and lived experience. Candy displayed herself as both a Hollywood superstar and as a Warholian art subject; she existed in spite of not only her body but also other's views on her gender. After Candy's death countless artists, writers, psychologists, historians, and people took on the torch of performative gender variance. In 1990, Judith Butler released their breakthrough work *Gender Trouble*, which declares gender

¹²¹ Tiara Buchanan, "Black Versus White, Again," *A Gathering of the Tribes*, Accessed May 1, 2025, <https://www.tribes.org/web/2006/08/13/black-versus-white-again-reviewed-by-tiara-buchanan>.

¹²² Sarah Bertrans, "Avedon's Centenary at the Met: Monumental Photomurals Take the Stage," *Highbrow Magazine*, April 5, 2023, <https://www.highbrowmagazine.com/23520-avedon-s-centenary-met-monumental-photomurals-take-stage>.

is a performance. In that touchstone work, Butler theorized that rather than gender being created by some innate force within the self it is instead perpetuated by social interaction with other human beings. Butler writes “Genders can be neither true nor false, neither real nor appar-ent, neither original nor derived. As credible bearers of those attributes, however, genders can also be rendered thoroughly and radically incredible.”¹²³ Through her performance of over-the-top, hyper-feminine gender, Candy paved the way for gender-critique by numerous modern and contemporary artists.



(Figure 18) Left: Cindy Sherman, *Untitled 205*, 1989. Chromogenic color print 53 1/2 x 40 1/2 in. (135.89 x 102.87 cm). Right: Yasumasa Morimura, *Self-Portrait (Actress) / Black Dress*, 1996. Photograph, 47.25 x w: 37.4 in (120.02 x 95 cm).

Photographers and post-modern icons Cindy Sherman and Yasumasa Morimura came to popularity shortly after Candy’s death in the 1980s and formed themselves into other people and characters. Throughout her career, Sherman has portrayed exaggerated male *and* female characters, and, like Candy, has connected to art history, most notably in her *History Portraits*

¹²³ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 180.

series. Her portrait *Untitled 205* depicts Sherman as an exaggerated version of Raphael's *La Fornarina* with a prosthetic breast-and-stomach-plate.¹²⁴ Morimura's photography has also spanned a wide range of art history from Manet's *Olympia* to portraying Marilyn Monroe. He addresses these images through the lens of Japan's relationship with Western culture, and has sometimes taken an extremist approach to portrayal as he did in *Self-Portrait (Actress) / Black Marilyn*.¹²⁵ Candy, Sherman, and Morimura have all disrupted the expectation of the female form in art. Women are not simply for consumption, they have unexpected features, exist solely for themselves, and confront audiences.

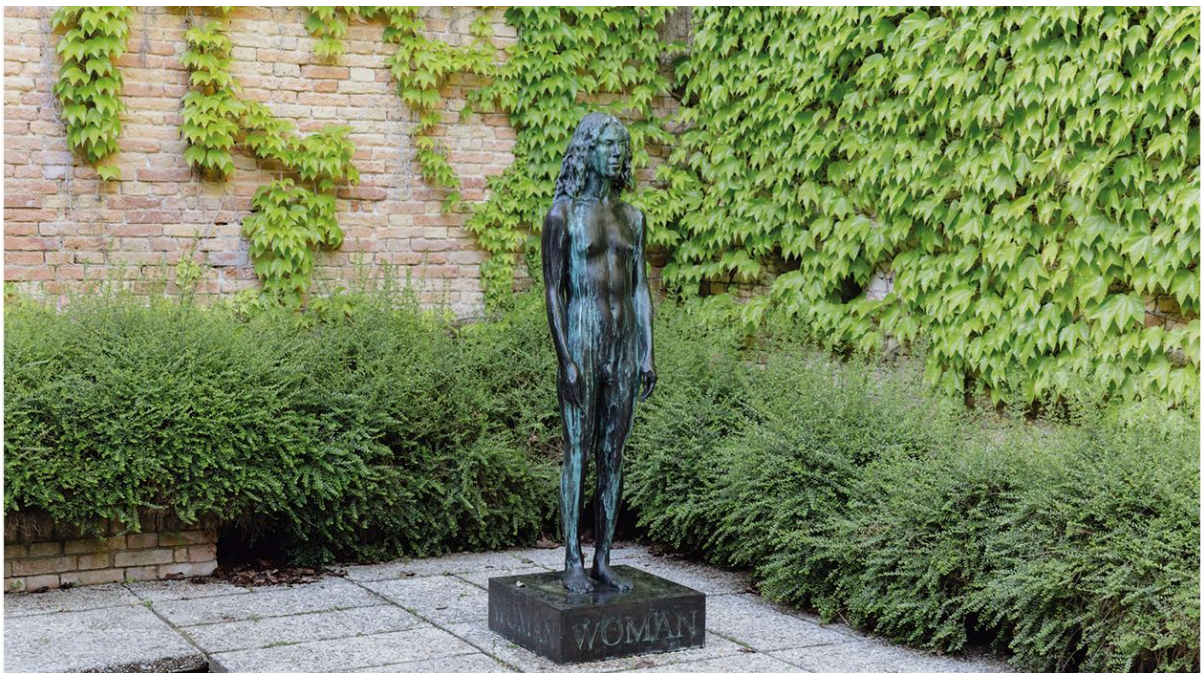


Figure 19. Puppies Puppies, *A Sculpture for Trans Women A Sculpture for Nonbianry Femmes A Sculpture for Two-Spirit People...*, 2022. Installation View, Sculpture Garden at the Giardini della Biennale in Venice, 2024. Bronze cast on engraved bronze base, 74.8 x 23.6 x 23.6 in (190 x 60 x 60 cm).

In contemporary art, a number of transgender artists have continued the exploration of trans issues in art with a direct hand in the creation of said art. Trans woman and Dallas-born

¹²⁴ Beth Hinderliter, "The Multiple Worlds of Cindy Sherman's History Portraits," *Art Bulletin of Victoria* 44, May 30, 2014. <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/the-multiple-worlds-of-cindy-shermans-history-portraits-2/>;
Yasumasa Morimura, *Daughter of Art History*. (New York: Aperture, 2003), 113-123.

¹²⁵ Morimura, Yasumasa. *Daughter of Art History*, 113-114.

artist Puppies Puppies has exhibited her sculpture *A Sculpture for Trans Women...* in a number of public spaces including at Art Basel, the Zabłudowicz Collection, and in the Carlo Scarpa-designed garden attached to the Biennale Pavilion at the 2024 Venice Biennial. This sculpture is of the artist's nude form, and works very similarly to how Candy existed. The nude sculpture confronts unexpected artists as a representation of trans womanhood, whether the audiences like it or not (fig. 19). Like Candy, Puppies Puppies has been met with backlash, including her sculpture needing a security guard and purposefully being peed on by dogs.¹²⁶ Over the duration of the Venice Biennial the face of the sculpture turned from a tarnished green to a golden mask. Unlike other nude sculptures, her breasts and genitals remained untouched. Outside of representation, contemporary artists such as Hai-Wen Len and Jes Fan explore trans topics through abstraction and modification of the human form. The representation of Candy Darling through the 60s and 70s has allowed artists and will continue to allow artists to explore issues of transness, gender, femininity, and representation.

The visibility of Candy Darling has opened doors for transgender models, actors, artists, and existence. As of 2024, A Candy Darling biopic is in production, directed by Zackary Drucker with Hari Nef cast to play the role of Candy.¹²⁷ Actor Stephen Dorff played Candy in *I Shot Andy Warhol* (1996), and drag queen Willam Belli played Candy in *Cinema Verite* (2011). To this day, Candy's legacy persists through films, photographs, music, art, books, interviews, and more. She is immortalized in the songs "Candy Says" by The Velvet Underground, "Take a Walk on the Wild Side" by Lou Reed, and "Citadel" by The Rolling Stones. Photographs of her are featured on the covers of the single "Sheila Take a Bow" by

¹²⁶ Zachary Small, "This Artist's Next Project has her 'Terrified.' That's the Point." *The New York Times*, September 7, 2023.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/07/arts/design/jade-kuriki-olivo-puppies-puppies-new-museum.html>.

¹²⁷ Marc Malkin, "A Candy Darling Biopic is in Production John Cameron Mitchell to Produce Warhol Superstar Candy Darling Biopic Directed by Zackary Drucker (EXCLUSIVE)," *Variety*, March 26, 2024, <https://variety.com/2024/film/columns/john-cameron-mitchell-producer-candy-darling-biopic-1235952176/>.

The Smiths and the album *I Am a Bird Now* by Antony and the Johnsons. She has been portrayed in sculpture by Greer Lankton, inspired the poetry book *Elegy Department Spring* by Kay Gabriel, and the fashion magazine *C☆ndy Transversal* is named for her.¹²⁸

Candy inserted herself as an unforgettable trans woman in the creative avant-garde of 1960s and 70s New York City and has earned recognition as an iconic trans person whose legacy remains foundational in the history of trans visibility. Through photographic representations thereof, Candy Darling asserted her over-the-top feminine persona. Though she was documented by many artists, including Richard Bernstein, Andy Warhol, Richard Avedon, and Peter Hujar, her persona has continuously distinguished her as a glamorous diva. Candy Darling remains an eternal trans woman and persona whose now fifty-year-long legacy has persisted and will continue to endure perpetually.

¹²⁸ Luis Venegas, “Heroes: Luis Venegas of C☆ndy Transversal,” By Kevin Ponce and Savannah Sobrevilla, *VMagazine*, 148 (Summer 2024,) <https://vmagazine.com/article/heroes-luis-venegas-of-c%E2%98%86ndy-transversal/>.

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