

**ART & CULTURE / IN PICTURES**

## Anton Perich: A Digital Pioneer

**In Pictures is a still and moving image gallery for significant works,  
events and places**

**— October 17, 2014 —**

Anton Perich arrived in New York in the late 60s, tumbling almost immediately into the vibrant, fast-paced social whirl of the city. Using his camera as a ticket into Warhol's factory, he took a series of iconic photographs that captured the decadence, rebellion and creative freedom of the era: Studio 54, The Chelsea Hotel, Max's restaurant and all of the wild and notorious characters that revelled within. Perich was also instrumental in launching the digital movement, designing and building a revolutionary electronic painting machine that executed huge canvases line by line, predating the inkjet printer and pioneering a new form of electronic art. He was also the creator of one of the first underground television shows, Anton Perich Presents, where he interviewed everybody from Candy Darling to Charles James.

The Croatia-born photographer shook up America with his daring footage, off-kilter methods and charismatic style, groundbreaking for its time. This weekend Postmasters Gallery opens the first large-scale exhibition of his work. Here, AnOther speaks to Perich about New York, his paintings and his most controversial memories.

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***"Reality is not what photography is about –  
it is an abstract world based on the seductive  
and the fantastic" — Anton Perich***

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Anton Perich on... his first camera

"I think it was a camera that I borrowed from my older cousin. It was some kind of black box, German camera that took a large format film. The same camera that Hitler had. My cousin also taught me how to write poetry. From then on, I thought photography and poetry were the same thing. Photography is the most abstract art. Reality is not what photography is about — it is an abstract world based on the seductive and the fantastic."



Candy Darling, 1972. Photography by Anton Perich

Anton Perich on... New York in the 1970s

"New York was the inspiration. New York was nights without days. Everybody went to Max's Restaurant. I spoke very little English, so the camera helped me to establish contact with people. I started shooting everybody I met. Candy Darling, Jackie Curtis, Cyrinda Foxe, they loved it. I was like some early Hollywood paparazzo. Andrea Feldman was the hottest and most brilliant thing."

Anton Perich on... his electric paintings

"I designed a painting machine in 1977, in my loft on 210 Fifth Avenue. I really fell in love with the electric image, constructed line by line, by the Cathode tube. There were no inkjet printers then, this was the 70s, so I had to create one myself, using an analog instrument. The machine painted with oil paints, acrylic paints, ink, markers, pens and pencils. It was very primitive, rejecting all superfluous information by letting it drip down the canvas. It was revolutionary. Of course, everybody hated my work, especially art galleries and museums. Now everybody loves it. The long life is useful sometimes."

Anton Perich on... his television show

"I shot at Max's, at Studio 54, at art galleries, at great parties. I shot R. Couri Hay talking to Charles James; Tinkerbelle, Nicki Weymouth and Manolo Blahnik; Jerry Hall in Huntington Hartford's tie closet. The story was that Jerry lived in his closet and she peed on his ties, if I remember right."

Anton Perich on... Andy Warhol

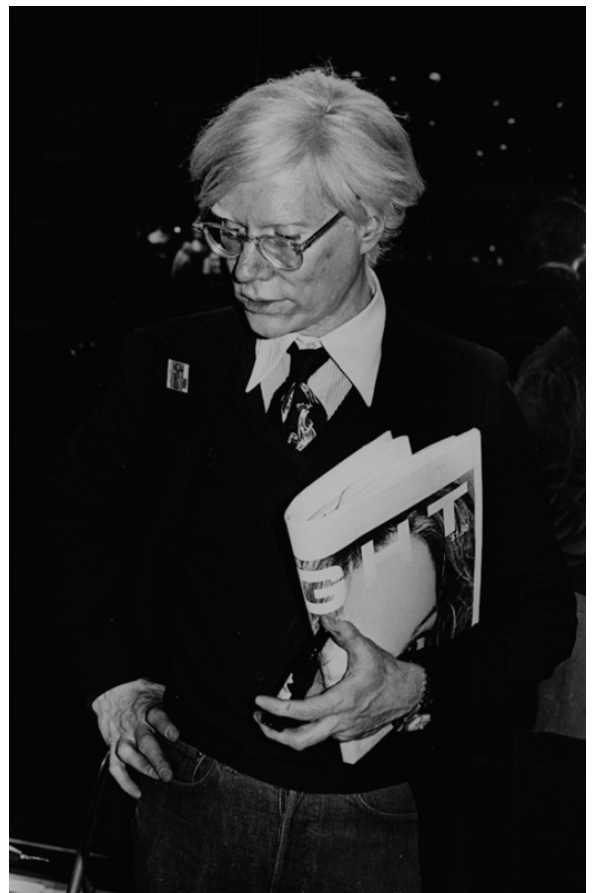
"He was the greatest artist and the shyest person on the planet. He was painfully shy in front of the camera."

Anton Perich on... the most controversial moment on the show

"When Danny Fields, the great music legend tried to insert a light bulb into Jagger look-a-like Sami Mellange's ass. And then the screen went black, like it had blown the fuse."

*Anton Perich: Electric Paintings is on at the Postmaster Gallery, New York until November 22.*

Text by Mhairi Graham



*Andy Warhol Photography by Anton Perich*