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Andy Warhol's 'Sixty Last Suppers' to Be Shown in Milan
The painting will be on display at Milan's Museo del Novecento March 24 to May 18

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Andy Warhol in front of The Last Supper (Yellow) (1986) at the opening of Andy Warhol – Il Cenacolo at Palazzo delle Stelline, Milan, January 22, 1987. © Archivio Garghetti. Courtesy Gagosian.

WARHOL IN MILAN — Milan's Museo del Novecento is marking the 30th anniversary of the debut in the city of Andy Warhol's final work, "The Last Supper," inspired by Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece.

The museum overlooking the Duomo cathedral will present the monumental painting "Sixty Last Suppers" March 24 to May 18, in the Sala Fontana, with its dramatic ceiling relief and neon by Lucio Fontana. The presentation anticipates the 2019 project called "Milan and the Legacy of Leonardo 1519-2019," which will celebrate 500 years since da Vinci's death.

Warhol's "The Last Supper" bowed in 1987 at the Palazzo delle Stelline in Milan and was commissioned by gallerist Alexandre Iolas in 1984 as a response to the famed da Vinci work created between 1495 and 1498 on the refectory wall of the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in the city.

In tune with his style, Warhol approached the subject using trinkets and popular images, as well as a black-and-white photograph of a widely circulated 19th-century engraving, and a drawing that he found in a 1913 Cyclopaedia of Painters and Painting. He then generated close to 100 variations on the theme — silkscreen paintings, prints and works on paper. Warhol explored different figures making variations on orientation, scale and color.

“Sixty Last Suppers,” which approximates the scale of Leonardo’s original, is one of the largest and most complex works in the series, and the black-and-white reproduction is repeated 60 times so that, from a distance, the 10-meter-wide, silk-screened canvas is reminiscent of a modernist building with a grid of identically scaled units. “Sixty Last Suppers” was included in “Andy Warhol: A Retrospective” at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1989.

In a bizarre twist of events, “The Last Supper” was Warhol’s last project as he died one month after the exhibition opened in Milan.

“Sixty Last Suppers” is supported by and in collaboration with Gagosian, and sees the participation of Jessica Beck, associate curator at the Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh.

The exhibition design is by Massimiliano Locatelli, CLS Architetti.