

A FAR-FROM-STARVING ARTIST



Photos by Daniel Freil/New Jersey Herald

Artist Philip Pearlstein, of Highland Lakes, sits with a recent portrait of his neighbors that he painted while in his home studio. Pearlstein will be the focus of an upcoming program on NJN called "State of the Arts."

ARTISTIC APPROACH

Vernon man has
successful career
spanning 70 years

By **ROBERTA FUGATE**
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VERNON — Highland Lakes resident Philip Pearlstein has been creating art for nearly 70 years.

Encouraged by high school art teacher Joseph Fitzpatrick, during his junior year of high school Pearlstein entered two art projects in the 1941 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards competition. His oil painting, "Merry-Go-Round," earned him a first-place finish in that competition and it was featured at the Carnegie Museum of Art, in Pittsburgh, and reproduced for Life magazine.

Pearlstein and his work will be featured in an episode of NJN Public Television's "State of the Arts" program later this month.

Pearlstein, 84, currently divides his time between his apartment in New York City and home in Highland Lakes.

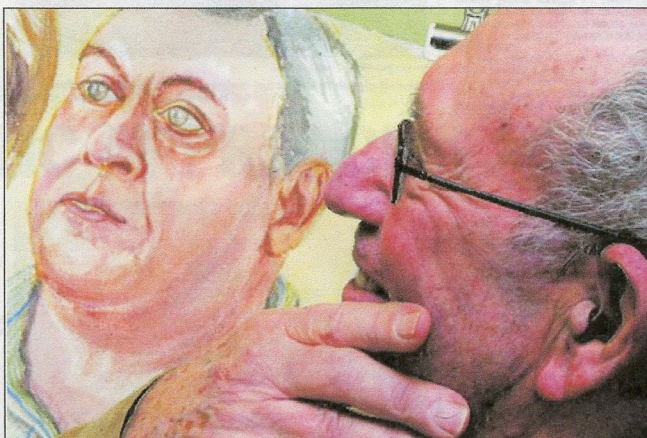
He and his wife, Dorothy, also an artist, have been married for 58 years. The couple has three grown children and two grandchildren.

After a year at Carnegie Tech, Pearlstein was drafted into the U.S. Army and was sent to Italy. In 1949, after finishing his bachelor of fine arts degree, Pearlstein moved to New York and began his career as a graphic design assistant. He eventually returned to school and received a master's degree in art history from New York University.

He began his teaching career at the City University of New York, teaching art and art history and retired from Brooklyn College in 1987.

Throughout his time in the military and as an art instructor, he continued to paint and create art work of his own.

Pearlstein said he has painted a lot of watercolors and considers himself a realist painter, but admits that for a while he was an abstractionist, "like everyone else" but said realism is more interesting to him.



Artist Philip Pearlstein, of Highland Lakes, reflects upon a portrait while in his home studio. "I'm lucky that I've had a good career as a realist," he said.

If you want to watch

The episode of "State of the Arts" featuring Highland Lakes resident Philip Pearlstein will air on NJN Public Television at 8:30 p.m. Jan. 16 and at 11:30 p.m. Jan. 21.

"I'm lucky that I've had a good career as a realist."

From the deserts of Arizona to a Sphinx in Egypt, Pearlstein has traveled across the United States and the world to paint. He was commissioned to paint a portrait of Henry Kissinger for Time magazine.

Most recently, from the basement studio of his Highland Lakes home, he has created about a dozen portraits of friends and neighbors that he hopes to put together for a future exhibit.

For the public television show, crews filmed Pearlstein's current exhibition at the Montclair Art Museum, his studio in New York City and the artist at work as he paint-

ed a portrait in Highland Lakes.

He has had regular gallery shows about every two years since his first one in the 1950s, he said. Much of his work, he said, has been purchased for museums or university collections.

"I've been lucky in having a nice career," he said.

Last fall, he traveled to Berlin and London for shows. Pearlstein said Adam Clayton, the bass player for the rock band U2, purchased a painting from his show in Berlin. "I thought that was terrific."

Known for his portraits of nude models juxtaposed with inanimate objects, Pearlstein said his artwork from the '60s and '70s has drawn more interest lately.

Pearlstein's latest exhibit "Philip Pearlstein: Objectifications" can be seen through Feb. 1 at the Montclair Art Museum.

The show was selected by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts as part of the American Masterpieces Series in New Jersey, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts.