

YOU ARE AN ARTIST

video art lessons

From Nana's Back Porch Podcast: Famous Artist Horace Pippin

[00:00:00] **Lucia Hames:** hello! This is Nana from my back porch. Thank you for joining me today. You are all artists.

[00:00:31] Good morning and welcome. I'm Nana, as you know, my recordings are all very real, and this really is me speaking directly to you, as you can hear. My neighbors are blowing leaves with their leaf blowers. So you'll be hearing them at work while we're talking about one of my newly favorite artists and his name is Horace Pippin.

Horace Pippin's Early Life

[00:01:07] Horace Pippin really was an artist. He was born on February 22nd, 1888. In upstate New York. He was one that was born to draw. He loved to draw pictures for his sisters, his grandmother, his classmates, the best words he ever heard were draw us a picture Horace. And he did. He practiced and practiced and became very, very good at having painted pictures of everyday life on his farm.

Horace Pippin During the War

[00:02:01] He left school to help support his family. Still, he drew and painted pictures between working shoveling coal and stacking grain. And then he entered the army and went overseas to fight in France, in World War II. And with the enemy planes flying above, Horace found a safe place in a Fox hole and filled his notebooks with drawings from the cold, dark trenches.

[00:02:43] If the fighting stopped for a little while his soldier, friends would say, make us a picture Horace, make us a picture of home. And he did. And he worked every day when he wasn't on duty in his spare time. But it was cold and it was dark. It seemed like for months on end, it rained every day. And there was not even a spot of color.

[00:03:32] And as he painted every day, he found peace in his paintings.

[00:03:41] Until one day he was severely wounded in his shoulder and it badly damaged his right arm. It healed, but it never was the same. He came home, but he had his arm almost permanently in a sling. When someone said to him, make a picture for us Horace, it just almost broke his heart. He couldn't, his arm was virtually unusable at the time.

Learning To Be An Artist with an Injury

[00:04:31] When he came home, he married. And he was still big and strong, but because of his injured arm, he couldn't find a job and he wanted to paint again, but his arm wouldn't allow movement. So he just took odd jobs. And one night he was just so downcast and depressed. And he was looking at the, at the fire, in the fireplace where he lived and he saw a fire poker.

[00:05:13] Now those of you that have a fireplace or a stove, a fire poker is a long metal or iron sort of oh, I guess it's about a two foot long stick and it has a hook on the end of it. So you can, can roll a log around and get it to, burn faster and better. You can shift the fire with a fire poker. That's what it's called a fire poker.

[00:05:51] You poke the fire with it. He looked at the fire poker. And he thought maybe I could use that fire poker. So he waited until the fire poker was cool enough to handle and he put the fire poker on the underside of his right arm from the shoulder, all the way to his wrist. And he tied it down with a little bit of string or rope and he could lift his arm.

[00:06:35] Finally. He still couldn't draw that well with it, but he found that he could use his left arm to move his right arm and with exercise and working with that damaged right arm, he achieved a better painting after months and months of sort of having physical therapy himself.

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"There are no mistakes in chalk pastel art!" - Nana

[00:07:19] His arm grew stronger and he used an old brush and leftover house paint. And he even used old shirts that had holes in them I guess – couldn't wear them anymore. And he would stretch it across a piece of flat wood and use the shirt as a canvas. He painted every day after doing his odd jobs, using leftover gray paint.

Horace Pippin's Signature Splash of Color

[00:07:57] And now he added a splash of red to each painting. That was his signature. Whenever I write to you or answer a question. I always put a heart. And then my name Nana that's, my signature. Horace's signature was to paint a picture, just like he remembered his memories from when he was a child, his memories from war time.

[00:08:35] But now he felt lifted. And more happy and he would take his paintbrush and put just a touch or a bit of red in each picture. A president of the local artists club saw Horace his paintings and told his friend N. C. Wyeth who was a very famous artist back then. And art shows followed Horace and his paintings hung in galleries and museums.

Self Taught Artist Horace Pippin

[00:09:24] Horace was an artist. He was a self-taught painter who turned memories stories. And everyday surroundings and very harsh struggles into beautiful art – art that is displayed in museums and galleries across the country. I urge you to read more about Horace Pippin. He is a wonderful artist. He's an artist of color.

[00:10:09] And he grew up in harsh times for people of color, but he found his success and he was so proud when people would say, paint us a picture. Horace

[00:10:31] Thank you for being with me today. I've enjoyed this and I hope you have too. And I want you to remember when you sign your paintings, just like Horace, put a little splash of color in your paintings. It will make you happy. It makes me happy. Love, Nana.

[00:11:10] Thank you for listening, artists, friends, please leave a review and share this with a friend. We invite you to join us in the, you are an artist clubhouse at

chalkpastel.com where we have over 700 yes, 700 video art lessons. We would also love for you to join us on Instagram, Facebook, and more, and be sure to tag us when you share photos of your artwork, we cannot wait to see, I'll be talking to you again soon.